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Iran making stronger Vincennes case

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran is gathering documents and evidence to strengthen its claims for compensation from the United States in the 1988 downing of an Iranian airliner over the Gulf, Tehran Radio said Saturday. An Iranian official told Tehran Radio that the government had asked the World Court to extend the deadline for Iran to respond to U.S. objections to court jurisdiction. That, he said, was due to the emergence of new data which Iran was analysing. Iran was originally scheduled to reply last month. But the World Court in the Netherlands said Thursday the deadline had been extended until June 9 at Iran's request without disclosing the reason for the postponement. The Iranian official did not elaborate on the new evidence being collected or its source. The Iran Air Airbus was shot down July 3, 1988, by the guided missile cruiser, USS Vincennes. All 290 passengers and crew aboard Flight 655, en route from Bandar Abbas in Iran to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, were killed. Washington contends the downing of the plane in the final weeks of the Iran-Iraq war was an accident. But a British newspaper last month reported fresh evidence in the case, suggesting the Vincennes was inside Iranian territorial waters when it fired two SM-2 block-2 missiles that hit the airliner.

'U.S. designed bombs to kill Saddam'

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States tried to kill Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in the last hours of the Gulf war by bombing a hardened bunker with precision bombs designed specifically for that purpose, U.S. News and World Report said in its latest issue. The magazine said that on Feb. 27, 1991, just hours before the cessation of hostilities, two air force F-111F aircraft dropped special 2,268-kilogramme bombs on a bunker at the Al Taji air base about 25 kilometres northwest of Baghdad. "Knowledgeable officials said the target chosen on the evening of Feb. 27 represented their best guess at where the Iraqi leader might be," it said. The Bush administration has repeatedly denied having specifically targeted President Saddam. Under a 10-year-old executive order, the U.S. government and its agents are banned from any attempt to assassinate a foreign leader. But the magazine said two GBU-28 bombs, the first of their kind to be manufactured, were intended to give the United States "one final shot" at President Saddam. The Defence Department reiterated on Friday that the United States stood by its stated policy. "It has never been our policy to target individuals," said spokeswoman Susan Strednansky of the air force.

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Hizbollah calls for prisoner swap

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's fundamentalist Hizbollah said Saturday it was still ready to exchange captives for hundreds of Arabs held by Israel. Hizbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Abbas Musawi told British television in an interview: "We took Israeli and SLA (the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army) captives in military confrontations... captives from our side were taken from their homes, yet we say: 'Let there be a swap.' If the matter gets complicated we consider that the reason is the Israeli enemy." Hizbollah never says whether its captives are alive or dead. It is believed to hold eight SLA men and the remains of Israeli soldiers Rachamim Al Sheikh and Yoosi Fink, who were captured by Hizbollah guerrillas in 1986. The only missing Israeli believed to be still alive is airman Ron Arad, who is held by another fundamentalist faction and is regarded as the key to any further exchanges.

Chad combat not as violent as reported

N'DJAMENA (R) — Journalists touring a combat area in western Chad found few signs of the intense fighting the government had reported between the army and rebels of deposed President Hissene Habre. The reporters on Friday ended the first official sanctioned tour of the Lake Chad area since combat began shortly before new year's day. "I'm not at all convinced there was really any combat here," said one officer touring the town of Bol, which the government claimed had been captured by the rebels. "I was surprised to see wounded showing up in (the capital) N'djamena," said the officer. The government said it had killed more than 400 rebels and destroyed more than 100 vehicles, some equipped with heavy weapons, in four days of fighting which ended with Mr. Habre's forces being routed and forced to flee back to bases in Niger. The reporters found no damage to buildings at Bol. At Liwa, a smaller town the government said was recaptured from rebels, the only trace was several charred hulks of pick-up trucks.

Arafat: Killer of PLO leaders executed

TUNIS (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said on Saturday the PLO had been executed for the Gulf war eve assassinations of three PLO leaders, including his right-hand man Salah Khalaf. Hamza Abu Zeid, 38, was convicted in April by a Palestinian military court in Yemen of shooting Mr. Khalaf (Abu Iyad), senior PLO official Hael Abdul Hamid, and a top Khalaf aide, in Tunis on Jan. 16. Mr. Arafat said in a speech to mark the first anniversary of Abu Iyad's death that the execution had been carried out. He did not say where or when but Palestinian sources told Reuters Abu Zeid was secretly executed in Yemen nearly four months ago. Abu Zeid, who is said to have deserted from the PLO to the extremist Abu Nidal group, was arrested a few hours after the assassinations. A PLO official who saw a videotape of the trial quoted Abu Zeid as saying: "It was Abu Nidal who gave me the order, but I do not know who was behind him."

Syria negotiating arms deal with Moscow

BAHRAIN (AP) — Syria is negotiating a \$2 billion arms deal for its air force and air defence with Russia, the London Arabic-language daily Al Hayat reported Saturday. Quoting unnamed Russian sources in London, the paper, which is also printed in Bahrain, said the deal covered sophisticated MiG-29 and Sukhoi 24 jets, and SAM-10 and SAM-11 air defence missiles. The sources told the paper's military correspondent current negotiations between Damascus and Moscow were "a follow-up to negotiations that started between Damascus and Moscow immediately after the Gulf war."

Bilaterals begin Monday; focus remains on two-track approach

From George Hawatmeh in Washington

THE THIRD round of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks is set to begin here Monday, and the focus of the negotiations will once again be the issue of separate Palestinian representation in the two-track approach to solving the Middle East conflict.

The opening session, which was widely expected to be held today (Sunday), was postponed apparently because the Lebanese delegation objected to holding talks on a Christian holiday but more likely because the Arab delegations wanted some more time to study and reply to a new Israeli proposal aimed at breaking the deadlock over separate Jordanian and Palestinian representation within the joint delegation. There was also the feeling that the Israelis should not be given the opportunity to dictate their own terms on the timing of the talks.

The second round of negotiations, which was held in the U.S. capital between Dec. 10-18, broke up in an impasse over Israeli objections to the Palestinians being represented as a separate party, and after 30 hours of what has come to be known

"corridor diplomacy" failed to reach agreement on the issue. The Jordanian and Palestinian teams were meeting separately yesterday to prepare a response to the new Israeli proposal, which was contained in a letter sent to the two chief delegates by the head of the Israeli delegation, Eliyakin Rubenstein, on Friday. The two sides were to hold a joint meeting later in the day to coordinate positions on the response, which would be conveyed to the Israelis separately by the Jordanians and Palestinians either Saturday or Sunday.

According to Jordanian delegates, the new Israeli proposal centred mainly on the "question of numbers," meaning the number of Jordanian and Palestinian delegates that would sit on any team negotiating with the Israelis at one time, but it ignored the basic differences over giving authority to the joint delegation, which the Arab side is opposed to.

"The Israeli proposal," if it can be called that, "one Jordanian delegate said, "talks about general meetings instead of plenary sessions (by the joint delegation and the Israelis). This is progress, since in the 'general meeting' concept numbers are less impor-

tant. But the basic issue remains the kind of authority given to the general meeting. As far as we are concerned, procedure can be discussed in such forum, but it should have no authority over relevant issues that exclusively pertain to either one of the two tracks."

A Palestinian spokesperson sounded even more optimistic about the Israeli proposal. "It is positive in that it recognises that there are two tracks, that there should be no third-track (for the joint delegation) and it addresses some serious Palestinian concerns," the spokesperson said.

While both Jordanians and Palestinians agreed that the new Israeli proposal was a step forward, their spokespersons nevertheless insisted that there remained some important questions to be resolved before the negotiations lift the issue of separate representation behind and proceeded with talks on substantive matters, starting with the agenda.

The Jordanians and Palestinians have informed the State Department that Dr. Abdul Salam Majali and Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, heads of their delegations, will be showing up at officially designated site early Monday morning and would be

ready to meet with Mr. Rubenstein alone in order to work out arrangements for expanded meetings later on. There were reports in Washington Saturday that the Israelis would go to the State Department Sunday, even if the Arabs did not show up. But these reports were either discounted or could not be confirmed.

In the event that the problem of representation is solved quickly, Arab delegates expect that there will be even bigger problems over setting the agenda for the talks and also over the duration of this round and the venue for the next one.

The Palestinians want more than the interim self-government arrangements (ISGA) to be on the agenda of the talks here. For their part, the Israelis insist that they would not be staying beyond their self-imposed deadline of Jan. 15, and they therefore could not possibly agree to discuss anything other than the ISGA for the time being.

Evidently, the Israelis do not want to discuss the issue of Jewish settlements on the occupied territories. Nor would they want to discuss land, water and Palestinian national rights, according to

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Multilaterals represent long-sought international conference — King

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan considers the multilateral Middle East peace talks scheduled to be held in Moscow later this month as the long-sought international conference on the Middle East, His Majesty King Hussein said Saturday.

The King, addressing the Council of Ministers, recalled that Jordan had always called for an international conference on the Middle East to discuss regional issues. The King pointed out that regional issues are not covered by the bilateral phase of Arab-Israeli peace talks.

The Jan. 28-29 Moscow conference, which will bring into the Middle East peace process many nations which are not directly involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, will discuss issues such as water rights, refugees, disarmament, joint projects and the environment.

The Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon — the other three parties to the peace talks with Israel — have indicated that their

attendance in Moscow depends on progress made in the bilateral phase.

King Hussein and other senior Jordanian officials have affirmed that the Kingdom believes that the multilateral talks would not only help resolve many of the common problems of the countries of the region but would also contribute to ensuring the success of the bilateral talks.

The King, in his comments to the Council of Ministers during a Cabinet session which he partly chaired Saturday, said Jordan was studying the developments in the former Soviet Union following the collapse of the superpower.

Jordan, he said, is keen on bolstering its relations with the new Commonwealth of Independent States set up by former Soviet republics, particularly the Islamic republics.

Jordan is seeking to improve its relations and rebuild bridges of understanding with other Arab countries with a view to serving

the Arab and Islamic nations, the King said.

The King told the Council of Ministers that Jordan had never shirked its responsibilities and duties and it feels that it has a clear conscience with regard to pan-Arab issues.

At the outset of the Cabinet session, the King was briefed by ministers on the efforts undertaken by the various ministries and government departments to handle the problems posed by the recent snowstorms which hit Jordan.

The King was also briefed on the activities of the Armed Forces and the Public Security and Civil Defence departments to help open roads and offer relief supplies to citizens cut off by snow, particularly in the south.

The King paid tribute to the roles of the various authorities during the snowstorm crisis and noted that the Armed Forces were always ready to extend

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Israel's loan guarantee request a key influential factor in peace talks

Special from Washington

THE FATE of the third round of Arab-Israeli bilateral negotiations is scheduled to begin in Washington in the next couple of days, and the future of the talks in general, will be largely determined by a number of factors which are external to, but not isolated from, the negotiating process itself.

Most prominent amongst those factors is the issue of Israel's request for \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to absorb Jewish

immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

According to knowledgeable observers and sources here the question now is not whether the loan guarantees will be granted to Israel but what conditions the administration will attach to the guarantees.

The State Department and White House officials are expected to begin quiet consultations with Congress and the Israeli government soon. Indications are that the administration, not Congress, will take the lead in the

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Sharon unhappy over U.S. stand

TEL AVIV (AP) — Housing Minister Ariel Sharon said Saturday that linking U.S. loan guarantees to Israel's settlement policy in the occupied territories would be seen as holding Jewish immigration hostage to force Israel into political concessions.

Mr. Sharon, who spearheads construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, urged the government to take immediate steps to ensure Israel could continue to absorb the immigrants without the guarantees.

Asked if he thought the settlements would jeopardise Israel's request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees Mr. Sharon said: "I think this is all an excuse."

"The settlements are not an obstacle to peace and the attempt to use the threat of the guarantees to pressure Israel into political concessions is an act that must be presented... as against spirit of humanity," he said on Israeli army radio.

"There is no connection. What are they demanding from us? What do they want, to hold the Jews in the (former) Soviet Union as hostages... so we will make concessions on our vital security needs?" Mr. Sharon said.

Mr. Sharon said Israel would have to try and convince Washington that the settlements are "vital to its security" and should not be linked to granting the guarantees.

"If we don't succeed we will have to prepare ourselves in a different manner," Mr. Sharon said. "It is very important to start these preparations now, and it will be slightly harder for every one of us."

"I want to stress that despite all the difficulties we have the ability to do this step without the guarantees. It will be great pity, very regretful and unfair, but we have the strength to do this, if we only want to," Mr. Sharon said.

King receives Libyan message

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday received a message from Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi dealing with accusations linking Libya to bombings of two U.S. and French planes.

The message expressed Libya's readiness to cooperate with any judicial system in the world to settle the issue (see story below).

The message was conveyed to King Hussein by Libyan



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday receives Libyan Agriculture Minister Abdul Majid Qa'oud (Petra photo)

Agriculture Minister Abdul Majid Qa'oud in an audience at the Royal Court.

The audience was attended by Royal Court Chief Adnan Abu Odeh, Agriculture Minister Fayez Khasawneh and the Libyan Ambassador to Jordan.

Mr. Qa'oud arrived in Am-

Draft U.N. resolution urges Libya to cooperate in bombing cases

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The United States, Britain and France will ask the Security Council next week to urge Libya to fully cooperate in establishing responsibility for the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, Western diplomats said Friday.

But a draft resolution circulating among the 15 council members does not explicitly ask for extradition of the two Libyans indicted by the United States and Britain for the December 1988 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland. Western diplomats said extradition could be implied.

It also does not call for sanctions against the Tripoli government, but diplomats said that sanctions could be sought later.

The resolution was expected to be adopted, but not unanimously because some nations view it as an unprecedented council involvement in legal disputes among states. It was not known when the meeting would be held.

The draft resolution condemns the Pan Am bombing and the destruction of French UTA Flight 772 over North Africa in 1989. The French government has issued arrest warrants for four

Libyans.

In the Pan Am bombing, 270 people were killed. Another 170 lost their lives in the bombing of the French airliner.

The draft also "strongly deplores the fact that the Libyan government has not yet responded effectively to the requests to cooperate fully in establishing responsibility for the terrorist acts against Pan Am Flight 103 and UTA Flight 772."

It "urges the Libyan government immediately to provide a

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Doctor adds his voice to belie Kuwait incubator story

By Mariam M. Shahan Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Almost a year and a half after the media and an Amnesty International report claimed that babies in Kuwait hospitals were snatched out of incubators by invading Iraqi soldiers and thrown on the floor to die, evidence has surfaced that these reports were fabricated.

A senior physician working in the hospital in question, the Al Addan Hospital in Kuwait City, told the Jordan Times Saturday that the allegations were "cheap lies" that were "fabricated" to further shift "international opinion against Iraq."

The physician, a Palestinian who practised medicine in Kuwait for more than 20 years, preferred to remain anonymous fearing reprisals against his relatives still living in Kuwait.

"I was on vacation in Amman when the invasion occurred," he recalled. "I heard media reports that babies were being killed in hospitals. I decided that my place

was in my hospital so I left Amman for Kuwait. I asked all the employees on arrival about the stories of dead babies and stolen incubators and they denied that such things had happened in our hospital."

The physician told the Jordan Times: "We had 32 incubators in our special care unit for premature babies. I returned to Kuwait on Aug. 20, 1990 and until I left Jan. 13, 1991, we still had 32 incubators."

The now Amman-based paediatrician said that many of the babies had been taken home by their parents because only four of the original 36 nurses remained and of the 30 doctors only six remained. "The staff left because of the invasion. So with four nurses and six doctors you can't take care of as many babies," he said.

The story of the "cruel baby deaths at the hands of Iraqi soldiers" shocked the international community when a 15-year-old

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Some points of accord in Iraq-U.N. oil talks

VIENNA (R) — U.N. and Iraqi officials have reached several areas of agreement in talks on Iraqi oil exports, but total agreement will be needed before sales can resume, according to the head of Baghdad's delegation.

"We have to have total agreement before Iraq resumes exporting oil," Abdul Amir Al Anbari told reporters after the talks ended late Friday.

Iraq's oil exports were stopped by the United Nations following its invasion of Kuwait in August, 1990.

Asked whether there was a chance Iraqi oil would be back on the market within a few months, Mr. Anbari said: "That's a possibility, and we look forward to that day."

Both sides agreed on a report — details of which were not made public — that they will take back to New York and Baghdad for consideration, U.N. officials said.

U.N. Assistant Secretary-General Kofi Annan said they would meet again in Vienna, probably before the end of March.

Mr. Anbari said: "We've had very fruitful and constructive discussions and I am very happy with our work here."

He said there was appreciable progress, with particular regard to banking processes and marketing related to the oil trade.

He gave no further details, except for saying that the sale of Iraqi oil "may not be limited to one outlet."

which Iraq has refused to accept, sales were authorised only through the trans-Turkey pipeline to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan.

Iraq wants to be able to use its Gulf terminals as well. Mr. Anbari, who is also Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations, said he did not believe there was any serious objection to utilising more than one oil export terminal.

Late last year the U.N. gave permission on humanitarian grounds for Iraq to export \$1.6 billion worth of oil over a six-month period.

Iraq has rejected the conditions attached to that resolution and not made any official oil sales, saying that after all the U.N. terms were met too small an amount of money would be left to benefit the Iraqi people.

The resolution expires at the end of March, but Mr. Anbari said the work being done was "to see how we can make that scheme implementable and move it forward."

Mr. Anbari said the two sides had managed to agree on some points but others had been left open.

Asked by reporters whether those points in which there was no consensus represented minor or substantial issues, Mr. Anbari said: "It's a mixed bag."

Asked whether the United Nations was likely to roll over the current agreement with amendments, he replied: "They can either roll over or take other decisions."

(Under current U.N. condi-

Karami indicates private TV news to stop

BEIRUT (AP) — Prime Minister Omar Karami defended Saturday a government move to muzzle television stations which had served as the main propaganda outlet for the civil war militias.

"If the current media chaos continues, especially in illegitimate television, Lebanon will collapse," Mr. Karami said in a statement published by the independent Beirut newspaper Al Nahar and other dailies.

"The government will try to transform illegal television stations into commercial organisations. Those who want to deal with politics and news will have room for that on the state-run television," he added.

The government has given the private stations one month as of Friday to legitimise their broadcast operations or face being shut down. The TV stations were instructed to apply for commercial licences from the state-run Tele-Liban, which holds exclusive broadcasting franchise until the year 2012.

The decision was apparently designed in part to curtail militia influence as President Elias Hrawi's government struggles to restore peace in a country deeply fractured by the 1975-1990 civil war.

Mr. Karami's statement was the first clear indication that the private stations will not be allowed to broadcast news.

Information Minister Albert Mansour also said Saturday that commercial stations might eventually be permitted to broadcast the same news bulletin as that of Tele-Liban.

He said Tele-Liban's news programmes will be expanded to cover government and opposition activities "in a balanced and objective attitude."

The media crackdown united the rival militia warlords in anger.

"I am sorry that this decision has been taken," said Nabih Berri, leader of the Shiite Muslim Amal militia. Mr. Berri serves as a minister without portfolio in the 30-man cabinet, but was absent from Thursday's session during

which the media decision was adopted.

"I shall struggle in future sessions to cancel this decision," Mr. Berri said.

Mr. Berri and Druze leader Walid Junblatt own part of Al Mashrek, which is one of the two main rivals to Tele-Liban.

Zaher Khatib, state minister for administrative reforms, labelled the decision "deplorable."

"I have registered my reservations about it in Thursday's session and will continue to struggle against its implementation," said Mr. Khatib, a key shareholder in Al Mashrek.

Roger Deeb, also a minister without portfolio who did not attend the meeting, said the decision was "aimed at muzzling free media contrary to the course of history."

Mr. Deeb represents the Lebanese Forces militia in the cabinet. The Christian militia operates Lebanon's biggest television station, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC). Officials at LBC and Al

Mashrek refused to offer interpretations of the decision, saying they were waiting for a second cabinet meeting that would spell out details of how the decision would be implemented.

According to government statistics, 45 TV stations have been launched since the civil war erupted in April 1975.

Most militias, who controlled their own mini-states in much of Lebanon during the war, have disbanded and handed over their weapons to the army under an Arab League-brokered peace plan.

But their parent political factions remain influential and most are at odds with Mr. Hrawi's administration to one degree or another.

Privately owned radio stations, whose status has yet to be determined, interpreted the government decision as an attempt to impose censorship on newscasts in a country that traditionally has boasted a free press. There are 154 radio stations, mostly owned by political groups.

Algerian Islamists vow to strike fear into Israel

ALGIERS (AP) — Muslim fundamentalist leaders told tens of thousands of people Friday that their likely triumph in elections next week will strike fear into Israel.

The weekly prayers at the Kouda Mosque, a fundamentalist stronghold, are the last before a run-off vote next Thursday expected to give the Muslim hardliners control of parliament.

Abdul Kader Hachani, acting leader of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) told the faithful packed inside the mosque and in the streets outside that the Israelis fear their movement.

"We to them," Mr. Hachani said. "The announcement of our victory will shake them from their complacency."

The address was mirrored in other mosques around the city as FIS fired up its adherents for a vote that may decide whether Algeria becomes the first Islamic republic in North Africa.

The FIS programme calls for banning the consumption of alcohol, separate school classes for boys and girls, and protecting the family, which is widely interpreted as denying jobs to women.

The party won 188 seats outright for the 430-seat National People's Assembly in first round voting Dec. 26, just 28 short of a majority in the parliament. It is expected to win most of the 199 seats up for grabs in next week's run-off for seats where there was no first-round majority.

The National Liberation Front, which ruled Algeria as a one-party Marxist state since independence from France in 1962, captured just 15 seats in the first round. The Liberal Front for Socialist Forces won 25. Independents took three.

Mr. Hachani called on authorities to respect the people's choice.

"The decision to install an Islamic state is from now on in the hands of the people, who are expressing themselves through the ballot box," Mr. Hachani declared.

The Constitutional Council is weighing challenges of results for 145 seats from the first round. A third round of voting will be held

within three months for districts where irregularities are discovered. A sizeable number of overturned results could give anti-fundamentalists a mathematical chance to keep the FIS from power.

Mr. Hachani's speech came a day after several thousand women staged a protest in Algiers to defend their rights. They called for a one-hour strike next Wednesday, the eve of the vote.

"We do not have the ambition to Islamise Algeria," Mr. Hachani said Friday. "The Algerian people are already Muslim. We are only going to help them realise their aspiration to have an Islamic state."

The fundamentalists draw their support largely from young, poor and jobless men. About three-quarters of Algeria's 25.7 million people are under 30. Unemployment rate is 23 per cent.

Algers has been awash with speculation that the armed forces might seek to prevent a FIS victory.

Mr. Hachani raised the stakes Wednesday, saying the army had deployed in strength throughout the country and the authorities were dragging their feet on the second round of voting.

But diplomatic sources said on Thursday they had no evidence of troop movements.

The independent daily Al Watan said on Thursday "certain reports... speak of a growing malaise between the head of state and the main military leaders..." after a reported meeting between President Chadli Benjedid, Mr. Hachani and Abdul Hamid Mehri, head of the FLN. Both the presidency and the FIS denied the meeting took place.

The paper said the talks focused on possible cooperation between the president and a FIS-dominated parliament which did not appear at all "to the taste of the military leaders."

Military leaders have never hidden their dislike for the fundamentalists. Pledged to uphold democracy and the constitution, many of them fear the FIS might destroy the very system through which it comes to power.

Kuwait's new residency rules put many in a bind

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies) — Mohammad Melhem was dreaming of the day he could bring his wife and two children to live with him in Kuwait, but his dreams were shattered by new residency regulations issued by the government.

"I was optimistic before I read the new law, but now I have to live my life torn between my work here and my family in Damascus," said the 30-year-old Syrian electrical contractor, who came here two years ago.

Mr. Melhem is one of thousands of foreign workers who, according to the new regulations announced this week, do not qualify for residency permits for their families.

The regulations only allow private-sector workers who earn 650 dinars (\$2,275) a month to apply for such permits. Government workers who want their families with them have to make at least 450 dinars (\$1,575). The average salary is about 350 dinars. Mr. Melhem makes about 400 dinars a month.

Even some of those with the right salaries may not be able to afford to stay. The law has introduced annual fees of up to 200 dinars (\$700) per person.

The emirate announced after it was liberated from a seven-month Iraqi occupation Feb. 26 that it intended to slash the 70 per cent expatriate makeup of its two million population to a level where native Kuwaitis would be at least half of the total.

"The new regulations are mostly aimed at the unwanted

nationalities," said Hani Adu Bakem, a 21-year-old Jordanian born in Kuwait.

The number of the Palestinian and Jordanian community has shrunk from 450,000 before the Iraqi invasion to about 50,000.

Jamil Ishak, another Jordanian who is providing for his retired father, mother and two sisters, said it would be more economical for his family to move to Jordan while he continued to work here.

"The fees are just too much. They should be reconsidered," said the 23-year-old salesman.

But Mr. Ishak was not even sure that he would be granted a work residency himself.

Like most Arabs who were here during the occupation, Mr. Ishak was required by the Iraqis to stamp his passport with an Iraqi residency.

Kuwait is now requiring all those who have such stamps to get their passports changed. Jordan's embassy in Kuwait is closed.

The headline of Al Anba newspaper asked the government on behalf of foreign workers to reconsider the regulations.

"The decision does not take our circumstances into consideration. We want a more humanitarian look," read the headline of the pro-government paper.

A cartoon in the same paper showed a foreign civil servant at his desk talking to himself.

"What am I to do, pay the rent, feed the family, send them to school, treat them or pay the fees?" wondered the man.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Widow demands return of hostage's body

PARIS (AP) — The widow of the only French hostage who died in captivity in Lebanon has demanded the return of her husband's body, and she criticised officials for not taking action sooner. In a letter addressed to French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas published in the French daily Le Monde, Mary Seurat, widow of Oriental scholar Michel Seurat, said she had been working for five years for the release of his body. "The list of officials I have years for the release of his body... and all I got in return was polite lip service, false assurances and meaningless courtesies," she wrote. Mr. Seurat was kidnapped by Islamic Jihad on May 22, 1985. He became ill in September 1985 with what fellow French hostage Jean-Paul Kauffmann said was hepatitis. Three months later he was removed from the cell he shared with Mr. Kauffmann and is thought to have died shortly after. His captors, however, announced his execution on March 5, 1986. In her letter, Mrs. Seurat severely criticised French officials for doing little to secure the repatriation of her husband's remains. She has said previously she believes her husband is buried in a Beirut cemetery. "I not that France today is the only power which has not demanded the remains of its deceased hostage. For their own men, the Americans, the Lebanese and the Israelis have taken publicly recognised steps towards this and have met with success," she wrote. French foreign ministry officials said they had no immediate comment on the issue.

Turkey and Armenia start air link

ANKARA (R) — The first flight between Turkey and neighbouring Armenia landed at Turkey's Trabzon airport on Friday, an Aeroflot Tupolev 154 with 110 people aboard. A spokeswoman for the Turkish organiser, Sarptur Travel Agency, said it would operate flights on Tuesdays and Fridays from Yerevan through the Russian Black Sea town of Sochi. The agency will charge citizens from the Commonwealth of Independent States \$50 and other nationals \$100, she said.

Indian held in killing of family in Dubai

NEW DELHI (AP) — Police have arrested a servant suspected of murdering five members of an Indian family he worked for in Dubai, news reports said. Ravjibhai Rawar was arrested Wednesday in his native Rumalagola village in the western state of Gujarat, the Times of India newspaper reported. It said he confessed to killing Ramesh Sagar, his wife, their two children and Mr. Sagar's 70-year-old mother. United News of India (UNI) said Mr. Rawar, who worked for the family for 12 years in the emirate, claimed he was driven to the crime because he was being sexually harassed by Mr. Sagar's 38-year-old wife, Rajouri. The victims, each wrapped in a blanket, were found Sunday battered to death with a cricket bat in their Dubai apartment. The children were aged 11 and 13. Police said Mr. Rawar fled Dubai aboard a flight to Bombay on Saturday, when the murder presumably took place. He reached Rumalagola, 950 kilometres southwest of New Delhi, on Monday, UNI reported. It said police are awaiting instructions from the government to deport Mr. Rawar to Dubai.

Terry Waite savours vacation

NASSAU (AP) — Freed hostage Terry Waite, on vacation with his family, insisted Friday he has always opposed exchanging arms or any other ransom for hostages. "I have no knowledge whatsoever of any arms dealings, and the church would never have any dealings at all with arms-for-hostages," he said in an interview with the Nassau Tribune. "In fact, before I was kidnapped, I left a note saying that if I was taken, there was to be no ransom paid and no exchange made." Mr. Waite also said two weeks on vacation with his wife, three daughters and son has done "a power of good" after his five years in captivity in Lebanon. The former captive said he was not sure about his future, expressed understanding of criticism from a fellow former hostage, and denied his captors' reported perception that he was a spy working with Oliver North in the Iran-contra arms-for-hostages deal. Mr. Waite, who was kidnapped while acting as a special envoy for the Church of England, said the Middle East was full of intrigue and his kidnappers were very suspicious. But his captors never asked Waite whether he was a spy and when he was released, they seemed "absolutely convinced" he was only acting in his church role. Still, he doesn't understand why he was kept in solitary confinement most of the time.

Moroccan king pardons 260 prisoners

RABAT (R) — King Hassan was pardoned 260 prisoners to mark the anniversary Saturday of an independence manifesto issued by nationalists during French rule. The justice ministry said in a statement 152 prisoners would be freed and the remainder would have their sentences reduced. The ministry did not identify the beneficiaries, who are usually common criminals traditionally pardoned by the king on public holidays.

Turkish party moves to expel Kurdish deputy

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's Social Democrat Populist Party (SHP) said Friday it would ask its disciplinary committee to expel a Kurdish nationalist deputy "permanently or temporarily" from the party. Anatolian news agency said. It said the SHP's decision came after an extraordinary session of the party prompted by a statement by Deputy Hatip Dicle in the Belgian daily Le Libre Belgique published on Thursday. Mr. Dicle, a member of parliament from the southeastern Kurdish city of Diyarbakir, was quoted as telling the paper that violence by the banned Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) was caused by oppression of Kurds by the Turkish government. "The Kurdish people (in Turkey) are forced by conditions to support the (PKK) guerrillas. We have to support the armed guerrillas," he was reported as saying. "An independent state is our ideal." More than 3,300 people have been killed since the PKK launched a violent campaign for independence in 1984. SHP Secretary-General Cevdet Selvi told Anatolian that Mr. Dicle's statement was "against the principles and manifesto" of the party. "Whatever should be done will be determined by the disciplinary committee of our party," he said. The SHP is junior partner in the coalition government formed by Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel in November.

Kabul said in dialogue with former Afghan king

KABUL (AP) — Two senior officials in the communist-style government have returned from Switzerland, where they reportedly tried to persuade Afghanistan's deposed king to help end the 13 years of war.

The government has refused to comment on the week-long visit to Geneva by Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil and Farooq Yaqoubi, minister of state security. Mr. Yaqoubi returned to Kabul Monday and Mr. Wakil came back Wednesday.

Diplomatic sources said Friday the trip was part of increased efforts to persuade former Afghan King Zahir Shah to play a key role in halting the fighting between the Kabul government and the guerrillas.

King Zahir Shah was overthrown in 1973 by a cousin — Mohammad Daoud, who himself was overthrown and killed in an April 1979 military coup — and has lived in Italy ever since. He is increasingly seen by many Afghans and foreign governments as the only person who can head a neutral interim government to oversee national elections.

Last week, Pakistan's army chief General Asif Nawaz met in Rome with a close aide of Zahir Shah, the first high-level contact between Islamabad and the 77-year-old former monarch.

Throughout the war, Pakistan has served as the conduit for military aid to and headquarters of the Afghan resistance.

But the rebels have said they would fight any attempt to bring back the former king. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the most outspoken of the fundamentalist rebel leaders, warned Zahir Shah's return would lead to increased bloodshed.

The rebels have been fighting to overthrow a pro-Marxist government installed following the 1979 coup.

The rebels were armed by the United States, Saudi Arabia and other sympathetic Arab states, while the Kabul government was supported by the former Soviet Union.

Washington and Moscow stopped all military support to their warring clients on Jan. 1, hoping to encourage them to negotiate a settlement based on a five-point plan drafted by the United Nations.

The plan calls for the cutoff of the weapons to all sides and a ceasefire followed by wide-ranging talks.

Although all warring factions have maintained indirect contact, they have refused to sit together at the negotiating table. But many Afghans are optimistic a conference later this month in Bonn, Germany, will help break the ice and lead to broader, U.N.-sponsored peace talks.

The three-day conference, which begins Jan. 27, is being hosted by former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt and his Social Democratic Party.

Greenpeace hits U.S. apathy towards Gulf environment

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S.-led involvement in the Gulf war resulted in an environmental disaster in the region, but the United States is doing little to help clean up the mess, the environmental group Greenpeace said Friday.

The group said four to eight million barrels of oil spilled into Gulf waters, killing marine life and clogging 740 kilometres of Saudi Arabia's shallow coastlines that are feeding grounds for birds.

It said 160 million barrels of oil now cover 60 per cent of Kuwait — 20 times the amount of oil spilled into Gulf waters — and that the 700 burning oil wells in Kuwait polluted the atmosphere with soot, gases and chemicals.

"The Gulf war began a massive uncontrolled experiment on the environment and its people," said Paul Horsman, coordinator of a Greenpeace environmental fact-finding tour that visited the region.

Yet the United States is shirking its duties to help clean up the disaster, Mr. Horsman said.

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO), a United Nations body that established a disaster fund to coordinate oil cleanup efforts in the Gulf, has received money and equipment from just 12 of its 135 member states, and the United States was not a contributor, Mr. Horsman said.

The fund contains about \$8.5 million, "which is not a lot of money," particularly when compared to the \$2 billion spent by Exxon Corp. to clean up 258,000 barrels of oil spilled in Alaska's Prince William Sound in 1989, he said.

"While some of the countries which made up the coalition forces have contributed to the disaster fund, it is incredible that neither money nor equipment has come from the United States," Mr. Horsman said.

The United States did lead a cleanup effort during the early days of the oil spills, and continues to monitor damage caused by fires and spills, he said.

Mr. Horsman said 15,000 to 30,000 birds so far have died from oil spills. He estimated that one million more migratory birds will not live after they touch down on the oil lakes.

"It is difficult to put into words the extent of the damage that has been done. Sand is glued up with oil. Trees and grass are covered with thick layer of tar. The damage is quite staggering," he said.

Allied air bombs, troop movement and equipment also damaged the desert, he said.

Bombs used to clear minefields pulverised topsoil and destroyed nearby vegetation. Troops left behind huge quantities of refuse and 115 million to 20 million litres of sewage in sand pits, he said.

"Deliberate oil spills and oil fires show that modern warfare is a war against the environment," Mr. Horsman said.

Iran before the Iraqis agreed to have their equipment monitored. Iraq has continuously rejected a U.N. plan to sell oil worth \$1.6 billion to buy food and medicine under strict controls. Iraq says the plan violates its sovereignty and independence, but the Bush administration insists Iraq must accept it unconditionally.

The trade embargo, even at the cost of having Iraqi civilians suffer, has majority support among both Democrats and Republicans, the poll found.

If the U.S. government finds that Iraq is continuing to secretly develop nuclear weapons, 66 per cent said the United States should take military action. Just 21 per cent disagreed and 13 per cent were uncertain.

Support for military action was slightly higher among men, the middle-income groups, those ages 35-54, and among Republicans. But the military option also had 65 per cent support among Democrats and independents.

The Associated Press poll on Iraq was conducted Jan. 2-5 among a random sample of 1,004 adults in the contiguous 48 states.

Americans remain hawkish on Iraq — poll

NEW YORK (AP) — Two-thirds of Americans surveyed in an Associated Press poll said the United States should strike Iraq militarily once again if it continues to secretly develop nuclear weapons.

One year after it refused to give in to international pressure to withdraw forces from Kuwait, Iraq remains a formidable villain in the eyes of most Americans, the poll found. The uncovering of its nuclear programme after the war has left Americans suspicious and unsympathetic.

A 61 per cent majority said the United Nations should continue to punish Iraq by cutting off trade until Iraq proves it has halted nuclear weapons development. Only 26 per cent agreed with an alternative opinion that the trade embargo must stop because it makes innocent Iraqi civilians suffer.

The telephone poll of 1,004 adults was taken Jan. 2-5 by ICR survey research group. The margin of sampling error was plus or minus three percentage points.

The poll found 65 per cent approval for President George

Bush's decision to go to war a year ago. This approval rate was down from 74 per cent a week after the war began, and 73 per cent six months after the bombing began.

However, the disapproval rate, 25 per cent, has not risen significantly. Approval dropped because more people said they do not know their position or refused to answer the question.

If high approval continues this election year, Mr. Bush could benefit politically, especially among men, who are about a third more likely than women to back the decision to go to war.

But the poll also shows weak spots in the public's approval. About two-thirds, or 67 per cent, of those surveyed said the United States should have continued fighting to force President Saddam Hussein from power. Just as in an AP poll six months ago, less than a fourth of Americans agree with Mr. Bush's decision to stop short of overthrowing the Iraqi president.

Most Republicans polled wanted President Saddam ousted, but 71 per cent of Repub-

licans still rated the U.S. military effort as successful. A slim majority of both Democrats and independents said the war was only somewhat successful or not at all successful.

Overall among Americans, 16 per cent said the U.S. military effort was completely successful; 36 per cent said it was mostly successful; 36 per cent said it was only somewhat successful, and nine per cent said it was not at all successful.

After Mr. Bush halted combat last Feb. 27, Americans were treated to a succession of memorable scenes of U.S. victory. They included the Iraqi acceptance of U.N. ceasefire conditions, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf's triumphant briefing, the return of Kuwait to its people and homecoming parades for American troops.

Yet those images were interspersed with disturbing pictures of starving Kurds, Kuwaiti brutality towards suspected Iraqi sympathisers, and Iraq's persistent militarism. U.N. nuclear inspectors last summer were met with resistance and even gunfire in

Iraq before the Iraqis agreed to have their equipment monitored. Iraq has continuously rejected a U.N. plan to sell oil worth \$1.6 billion to buy food and medicine under strict controls. Iraq says the plan violates its sovereignty and independence, but the Bush administration insists Iraq must accept it unconditionally.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Les Badaboks
17:45 Gecocope
18:00 News in French
18:15 Carnet de notes
18:30 News in Hebrew
18:45 News in Arabic
19:00 Empty Nest
21:10 Nippon
22:00 News in English
22:29 Gabriel's Fire

PRAYER TIMES

05:10 Fajr
06:32 (Sunrise) Duha
14:25 Asr
16:52 Empty Nest
18:14 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swaidieh Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzian Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

623541

Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561

Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751

Assrian International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623824, 654932

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Slight rise in temperatures will take place and winds will be northerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 2 / 13

Aqaba 6 / 17

Deserts 0 / 13

Jordan Valley 7 / 18

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 15. Humidity readings: Amman 40 per cent, Aqaba 45 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Wael Khatib 669117
Dr. Tawfiq Qabib 623029
Dr. Wael Dima 774800
Dr. Subeil Tannous 598793
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 776336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairouz pharmacy 634072
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shuciani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Al Hayek (—)

Al Shams pharmacy 275823

ZARQA:

Dr. Ziad Hawatneh (—)

Archaeologist probes Pella's past

AMMAN (J.T.) — An Australian senator and noted archaeologist is now on a month-long visit to Jordan participating in excavations at Pella (Tabaqat Fahl) in the Irbid region.

Dr. Karin Sowada, who used to work for Sydney University, told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the digging was mainly centered on unearthing artifacts dating back to the bronze and iron ages. She is also interested in the role of Pella as one of the 10 cities in the region which were instrumental in promoting trade between ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Dr. Sowada said that Pella was a stable trade centre throughout the Byzantine, Roman, Umayyad and Abbasid eras as well as during the previous historical periods.

Mrs. Sowada visited Jordan in 1989 and stayed here for two and a half months during which she took part in the archaeological excavations of the Kingdom.

Dr. Sowada was elected as senator representing the constituency of New South Wales at Australian Parliament in Canberra.



Students began their tawjihi examinations Saturday after the tests had been repeatedly delayed due to the snowstorm which hit Jordan last week (photos by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Tawjihi exams begin, students happy over delays

AMMAN (J.T.) — Interviews done by the Jordan Television on Saturday, the first day of tawjihi examinations, showed that generally students were happy about the late start brought about by unfavourable weather conditions. The delay was beneficial for students who had extra time to prepare, said one girl to Jordan Television.

Another one said that the set of questions provided to them by the Ministry of Education were appropriate and a level that would enable most students to answer.

The statements were taken on

the first day of the examination that had been put off several times due to the severe weather conditions, especially in the south of the country.

A total of 73,175 are taking the examinations in the literary, scientific, commercial, agriculture, industrial, nursing and hotel management streams.

A total of 971 halls have been provided in different regions, and were inspected by directors of education departments and other officials.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thumana Al Hindawi inspected examination

halls in the Husseinieh, Qadesieh, Shobak and Wadi Mousa regions, in southern Jordan, listening to the students' views about the examinations.

In a statement to Jordan Television later, Mr. Hindawi said he found the halls to be comfortably heated. He said that the services and facilities provided by the ministry to the students were bound to help them perform well.

Some of the students interviewed said that the disruptions of water and electricity supplies had had their adverse effect on their preparations.

Acting head of the Examinations Department at the Ministry of Education Abdul Rahman Shbeilat told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that no problems were reported on the first day of the 12-day session. Special arrangements have been made for students now being treated at hospitals or those at reformatory centres, he added.

According to Mr. Shbeilat, directors of education in different areas have been instructed to provide additional facilities to the students, especially in the south, in the aftermath of the snowstorm there.

Meeting to discuss improving municipal councils' activities

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment is convening a general meeting for the heads of municipal councils in the Kingdom next Saturday to discuss means for stimulating their local councils' role in community services.

The announcement was made by Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs Abdul Razzak Tubeishat, who said that he will chair the meeting at Al Hussein Youth City in Amman during which proposals will be presented and discussions conducted on means of upgrading and modernising legislations related to local council's function.

The minister said in a statement that organisations and specialists interested in promoting the work of local government will be invited to take part in the meeting, which comes in the wake of a tour Dr. Tubeishat made of a number of provinces to discuss their municipal council's activities.

Dr. Tubeishat Saturday chaired a meeting in his office for the planning committee which reviewed regional planning. Discussions centered on the ministry's contributions towards helping promote regional planning and stimulating the role of local communities in development-related matters.

In a statement after the meeting, Dr. Tubeishat said the committee plans to work out plans for construction programmes at the regional level, covering rural as well as urban regions and giving special attention to regional reorganisation in the Karak and Tafleh regions.

Among the committee's plans, the minister noted, is one which takes into account the implementation of developmental projects in rural and agricultural areas to stem people's migration to urban regions.

The programme, he said, entails re-organising the composition of the council's in charge of regional development and modernising studies on regional planning matters taken over the past years.

He said that the ministry in the last decade conducted regional studies on the Irbid, Amman, Balqa, Karak and Tafleh regions.

Sri Lankan official on visit to discuss increasing economic ties

AMMAN (J.T.) — Sri Lankan Minister of Plantation Industries Lokugamage Rupasinga Karunatilaka opened talks with Jordanian officials and businessmen Saturday and announced that his country could buy more Jordanian cement and potash as well as industrial products.

Mr. Tilaka, who arrived here on a two-day visit to the Kingdom, was speaking at a meeting with Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour during which discussions on promoting trade exchanges took place.

Jordan imports tea in large quantities from Sri Lanka and employs thousands of Sri Lankan maids. In exchange, Sri Lanka buys Jordanian white cement and potash.

Sources close to the delegation accompanying the visiting minister told the Jordan Times that Sri Lanka is now interested in Jordanian medicine and other manufactured products.

Mr. Karunatilaka heard Dr. Ensour give details about the Kingdom's products and prospects of trade cooperation with Sri Lanka. Dr. Ensour also underlined the importance for the joint Sri Lankan-Jordanian economic committee to hold a meeting as soon as possible to discuss increasing the volume of trade and to put forth other proposals designed to diversify and increase trade.

Mr. Karunatilaka has already visited Kuwait, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt before arriving in Jordan in the course of a tour designed to discuss Sri Lanka's trade with Middle Eastern countries, delegation sources said.

Mr. Tilaka told Dr. Ensour that Sri Lanka appreciated Jordan's assistance to the hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankan workers who passed through Jordanian territory en route home following the outbreak of the Gulf crisis in August 1990.

He said that he would recommend to his government that it buy Jordanian cement and potash as well as drugs, noting that his country has a strong desire to promote cooperation with Jordan in economic and trade fields.

According to delegation sources, Mr. Karunatilaka Sunday will hold talks with Jordanian importers of Sri Lankan tea and would meet a delegation of Syrian importers coming to Amman to discuss questions and trade with Sri Lanka, Sunday evening, they said, the minister was scheduled to fly home via Abu Dhabi.

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HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

QAF to organise workshops

AMMAN (Petra) — Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF) will organise four workshops at four of its social development centres in Maan, Tafleh, Karak and Amman. The workshops, each to last one day, will acquaint the participants with child nutrition programmes in the Kingdom's various governorates to be organised by QAF in cooperation with the Canadian Care Organisation. A total of 79 directors of social development centres, heads of charity organisation societies and QAF programmes coordinators will participate in the workshops.

New U.N. official assumes post

AMMAN (Petra) — The newly appointed United Nations resident representative in Amman, Othman Hashem, arrived here Saturday to assume his post. Mr. Hashem had occupied the same post in Somalia before being appointed in Amman.

AFM official leaves for meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — General Manager of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) Ummaya Touqan left Amman for Casablanca, Morocco, Saturday to take part in the annual meeting of the Arab Stock Markets Federation Council, which will start Jan. 13. The three-day meeting will discuss the federation secretary general's annual report and the prospect of holding a seminar on ways for activating dealings at Arab stock markets.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan and Italian ambassador to Jordan Franco de Courten at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of the activities of the Goethe Institute in Amman at the Institute, Jabal Amman.
- ★ Exhibition of photographs on the subjects of "Glimpses of Jordan" and "People" at the British Council.
- ★ Art exhibition by Shaker Abu Ghazaleh at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ Feature film entitled "Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves" at the American Centre — 7 p.m.

Arabiyat leads Jordanian delegation to emergency Arab meeting in Tripoli

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian parliamentary delegation led by Lower House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat is to take part in an Arab Parliamentary Union (APU) emergency meeting due to open in Tripoli Tuesday.

Dr. Arabiyat said that the three-day meeting will discuss Western threats to Libya over allegations that Libyan citizens were involved in the 1988 Pan Am aircraft crash over Scotland.

Dr. Arabiyat will leave Amman for Tripoli Tuesday. He will be accompanied by deputies Abdul Raouf Kawadeh, Senator Hosni Ayesh and Khaled

Samhuri, director of Dr. Arabiyat's office.

Dr. Arabiyat Saturday discussed with the chairmen and rapporteurs of permanent and temporary Lower House of Parliament committees plans of action in Parliament. Dr. Arabiyat said that several proposals put forth about Parliament's internal administration were discussed at the meeting.

The Lower House of Parliament's Legal Committee will hold a meeting Sunday to review the 1991 Civil Pension Law and the 1990 Housing Corporation and

Urban Development Corporation Law.

According to an announcement Saturday, the Legal Committee will hold a meeting Monday to review the 1991 Political Parties Draft Law.

The House's Water Committee is due to convene Tuesday. Also convening on Tuesday is the House's Committee on Palestinian Affairs.

The Upper House of Parliament announced Saturday that it will hold a meeting Monday to discuss a number of draft laws referred to it by the Lower House.

Coordination is key to dealing with future snowstorms, officials say

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher Civil Defence Council convened Saturday in a special session to discuss measures to be taken in the event of snowstorms and other severe weather conditions.

Interior Minister Jawdat Al Shoul, who chaired the meeting, told Jordan Television later that stress was laid on promoting coordination among the various concerned authorities so as to avert any shortcomings.

The committee also discussed ways to direct the public towards responsibilities and duties to help the concerned authorities in carrying out their mission under difficult weather conditions, the minister said.

The council reviewed the various responsibilities of the Civil Defence Department (CDD) Public Security Department (PSD) and Armed Forces in providing assistance to the public during storms.

Matters on coordination for future preparations to deal with any emergency during the winter season and coordination with

government departments in this matter were also reviewed, according to a statement released after the meeting.

The statement said that the council studied a plan of action presented by Mr. Shoul providing an integrated programme for each concerned department in future emergencies.

The plan calls for coordination among provincial governors, ministries, schools, universities and municipal councils which would employ all their resources to deal with future situations, the statement said. The council's plan also provides for sufficient food and fuel supplies to be stocked in advance of any storm.

Furthermore, the statement said, emphasis was laid on the role of the information services and the media to carry a picture of the situation.

The council groups representatives of civil defence and public security services as well as several ministries and the Jordanian Armed Forces.

As the council met, Health

Minister Aref Al Bataineh visited Maan Governorate in the south, one of the worst hit areas by the past snowstorm, and announced that the government has allocated JD 650,000 to finance the expansion of Maan Hospital and improve health services in emergency cases. The minister held meetings with local officials and heard demands for improved medical services.

Dr. Bataineh visited a number of health centres in Eil, Nueimat, Taibeh and Maan inspecting mother and child care services, laboratories and dentists' clinics. Later, he called at Wadi Mousa for a similar inspection tour.

Meanwhile, the Department of Meteorology announced Saturday that frost formation and slippery roads were expected in the early morning hours, especially in the eastern and desert regions of the Kingdom.

A department statement said that no rain was expected in the next 24 hours and that temperatures could reach 13 Celsius in the hilly regions around the capital.

Organisations collecting supplies to send to Iraqi people

AMMAN (J.T.) — The General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) is spearheading a campaign to collect large quantities of medicine, milk and clothes for Iraqi children this month, which marks the first anniversary of the Gulf war.

Federation women will drive vehicles and pick-up trucks to collect medicines, milk and clothes Wednesday before dispatching the donations to Iraq.

Federation President Dr. Haifaa Abu Ghazaleh said in a statement published in the local press that the campaign will also aim at raising JD 30,000 in cash through the efforts of the federation together with the Jordanian Committee for Supporting the Iraqi People.

On Jan. 15, Dr. Abu Ghazaleh noted, she will lead a federation team carrying the contributions to the Iraqi people.

According to Dr. Abu Ghazaleh, a group representing American mothers in the United States was due in Amman Sunday to take part in the campaign. The federation will be assisted in its humanitarian effort by the Jordan National Red Crescent Society and the Palestinian Womens Un-

ion. The team going to Baghdad with the donations will hold a press conference here Jan. 15, before departing for the Iraqi capital to give details about a programme of visits to a number of Iraqi cities to inspect the situation there.

According to Dr. Abu Ghazaleh, the team will make visits to hospitals treating children and will take part in some activities in Iraq during their stay there.

Dr. Abu Ghazaleh said that the campaign and the shipment of donation to Baghdad was part of a wider campaign the federation was conducting in cooperation with non-government organisations in Yemen, Algeria, Palestine and other countries to end the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq.

In 1981, the GFJW was founded to increase the economic, political and cultural opportunities for women through professional training, according to a press statement.

Over the past ten years, the federation has established 25 multi-purpose centres where women can develop skills ranging

from the traditional to the technical: from embroidery and cooking to typing and computer processing. These centres, which are open to the public, also provide nursery and kindergarten programmes for children, according to the statement.

The federation also supports development projects that provide work for close to 300 women. Traditional skills such as sewing, knitting and cooking are used to make handicrafts, clothing and food.

These products are sold in Jordan, enabling women to increase their family's income, improve their standard of living and participate in the national economy, the statement said.

The Iraqi campaign adds an international dimension to the work of the 15,000-member organisation, the statement said. The federation joins MADRE, a national women's organisation from the United States. In calling for an end to the sanctions against Iraq, representatives of the federation will deliver winter school uniforms, blankets and medical equipment for the handicapped to Iraqi children.

A new hope for cancer patients

By Nur Sati

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Cancer patients may soon have cause to hope as a new method for dealing with blood related cancer diseases was recently developed, according to a Jordanian graduate in immunology.

Dr. Maan Abdullah Al Khatib, 27, said the new process is based on heat shock therapy which enables the patients to use their own natural defenses. It is cleaner process for patients compared to the toxic drugs and chemotherapy currently used.

Dr. Al Khatib together with three other American doctors at Boston University improved on the technique.

The new process involves the participation of the patients' own white blood cells, the helper cells, which are naturally present inside the body, said Dr. Al Khatib.

The helper white blood cells will induce the killing of lymphopoietic cancers, which are mainly leukemia and lymphoma, after the tumor cells have been heat shocked, he said.

The heat shock therapy is done by increasing the temperature of the tumor cells to 43

degrees Celsius, outside the patients body, after which the patients own blood cells will induce the target cells or tumor cells to undergo DNA (deoxyribo nucleic acid) fragmentation.

"In other words, the destruction of the DNA material inside the cell itself by the cell itself occurs," Dr. Al Khatib said.

Although it has not yet been established whether cancer would recur, Dr. Al Khatib said that "since the whole process does not involve harmful drugs, the process could be repeated."

In 1988-1989 a method was first discovered in the United States, according to Dr. Al Khatib.

"We read about this recently and since we were working on the helper cells, we thought, maybe they could induce the killing of the tumor cells. We heat shocked the target cells and found that there really was a great deal of fragmentation of the target cells," he said.

"It was a new thing involving the helper cells and not the cytotoxic cells (the killer cells) in the process of killing, as was initially mentioned, in the process of killing," he said.

This is only the beginning of

what could signify relying on the patients own defences without using cytotoxic drugs and chemotherapy. The whole process still needs work. It could take another year and a half," he added.

The heat shock therapy takes about 30-45 minutes, according to Dr. Al Khatib. Usually the process involves a type of radioactive substance inserted into the tumor cells which has a 70 per cent to 80 per cent killing rate within two hours, he said.

Having used this treatment on about 20 patients in the United States, "you'd probably be able to see that the patient has improved within one to two weeks," he said.

Dr. Al Khatib and the three other American doctors at Boston University are currently testing this process on other tumor cells, mainly solid tumors such as the breast and colon cancers in the hope that "we would see the same type of results," he said.

Dr. Al Khatib, who graduated from Jordan University in 1988 and completed his internship at Jordan University Hospital, began work on a doctorate programme in 1990 and is currently working on a thesis hoping to complete it within two years.

U.S. peace group touring Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 20-member delegation representing the Pax World Foundation, a U.S.-based church group supporting the cause of peace world-wide, is on a visit to Jordan and heard a briefing Saturday on the post Gulf war situation and the conflict's adverse effects on Jordan and Palestine.

The head of the Foreign Ministry's Department of Foreign Affairs, Adel Irshaid, met the group, led by Charles Rhoads, and briefed them on the plight of the Palestinian refugees inside and outside the occupied Arab

lands.

Mr. Irshaid spoke in detail about problems facing the Palestinians in the camps and the adverse consequences on them resulting from the Gulf war, noting that the war has compounded the problem of unemployment among the returnees from the Gulf and caused chronic crises in such services as housing, education and health in the Kingdom.

Mr. Irshaid noted that Jordan and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) were receiving very limited assist-

ance to care for the Palestinians and offer health, social and educational services to them.

The Palestinian people under Israeli occupation are particularly suffering, largely due to deprivation under occupation, injuries sustained from continued Israeli forces assaults and inhuman practices and the deteriorating economic conditions in the Arab territories, Mr. Irshaid noted.

The U.S. church group is based in Maryland and will travel Sunday to the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip for an examination of the situation there.

Jordan Times

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 5710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 661242

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Using the same yardstick

IN A RECENT article in the Los Angeles Times, former U.S. President Richard M. Nixon advocated a new moral doctrine for the United States in the new era. Arguing the case against Vietnam, the former president criticised the West for normalising relations with that country and lifting trade sanctions against it. He built up the whole new doctrine around the notion that the West and the U.S. should not aid nor recognise aggressive and repressive regimes. Fine. The U.S. "seems" to be already moving in that direction. On Jan. 22, the U.S. is hosting a conference to aid the newly independent Soviet republics. Donor countries expected to attend include the industrial nations of North America and Europe in addition to Arab oil countries. One of the many conditions placed on nations applicable for this aid is that they should abide by democratic means of government and respect for human rights. Anyone defaulting would risk a cut or reduction in aid. This is also fine. We are heartened to see our Arab brothers championing for democracy and human rights. But this is double standard both on their behalf and on the West's and the U.S.' in particular.

Democracy and human rights have both become universal rights. Therefore, they are indivisible. If democracy and human dignity are rights for the peoples of the former Soviet Union, should they be denied for peoples of the Third World? If the U.S., as President George Bush asserted to his troops in the Arabian desert last year, feels that it is a light onto the nations and a defender of freedom and liberty, then it should spread its light onto all nations and deal with them as equals.

Now that the U.S., as leader of the West, dons the mantle of the world's moral champion, with its clout and power, its newly assumed role places additional ethical burdens on its shoulders. Not that it only needs to recall the vision of its forefathers but to endeavour to apply that world-wide. As Mr. Nixon has remarked in the article for the Los Angeles Times, U.S. foreign policy has so far been governed by U.S. interests. It supported repressive regimes when it suited U.S. interests and opposed elected governments when it did not. Now the U.S. should realise that such policies only resulted in more resentment for the U.S. by many people. This is why and now is when the U.S. should reconsider its foreign policy. Unless it applied one standard to all nations, no one will take it seriously.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Saturday recalled a meeting between the foreign ministers of the United States and Iraq prior to the U.S.-led aggression on the Iraqi people noting that Secretary of State James Baker went to the meeting with a clear aim of threatening to launch war while then Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz has sought to avert such a catastrophe. At the meeting held in Geneva, the Iraqi represented culture, peace and reason while the Americans represented arrogance, war and disrespect to other nations, said the paper. The Iraqis had sought to prevent the Americans from adding to their bloody record another black spot characterised by aggression and bloodshed, while the Americans went to the meeting with the only idea of committing crimes against the Arab and Muslim nations, the paper continued. Indeed Mr. Baker went to Geneva with one message: that the American troops and military machine are about to wage a devastating war on the Iraqi nation, the paper added. It said that the Americans had dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese and used chemical weapons against the Vietnamese, but these weapons and those dropped on Iraq last January did not achieve the goals of the American aggressors and could by no means achieve victory over a people backed by thousands of years of culture. The paper said that the Gulf war was a crime committed by terrorists and murderers against the Arab and Muslim nations.

A columnist in Al Dustour Saturday drew attention to the fact that this winter could bring in more snowstorms noting that concerned authorities should be prepared at the highest level to deal with weather conditions. The coming days could bring yet another snowstorm, according to some predictions, and no one wants to see the blessing of rain and water transformed into a tragedy for many people. Mousa Hawatme said. He said that the past snowstorm blocked roads, stranded people, prevented citizens from venturing outdoors and proved many services' shortcomings, especially lack of sufficient fuel, and disruption of electric supplies. The writer said that the machinery used to remove the snow from some roads caused a lot of damage while the frosty weather and slippery roads caused numerous accidents, with untold material losses. He said that should another snow-storm hit the country, many of the vital services could be paralysed. He drew attention to the fact that some European countries have been buying salt from Jordan for the sole purpose of using it on the roads to dissolve the snow and save themselves the trouble of clearing the roads. Indeed, Jordan possesses a great deal of salt in the Dead Sea and Azraq, which could easily be put to good use to melt the snow, said the writer. He said that the use of salt was one of other ideas that could help the country deal with the consequences of severe weather conditions during the present and future rainy seasons.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Facing indebtedness with growth

SOME reasonable criticism was offered against the economic adjustment programme adopted by Jordan in coordination with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It argues that the programme was supposed to be the cure of the indebtedness crisis, yet it allowed re-scheduling of debts, capitalisation of interest and receiving fresh credit in excess of repayment. Thus, according to the Jordan will proponents of this argument, find its indebtedness higher by the end of the programme in 1998 than it was before the programme in 1991.

This criticism is not valid. The programme was adopted to enable Jordan to face the indebtedness problem without sacrificing growth and with the minimum social hardship. The expectation is to reduce the debt burden through relief, not through full repayment which is beyond the capacity of the Jordanian economy. If forgiveness of the debt, in part or total, is not feasible now, three years after our economic crisis of 1988, it may become so after 10 years, in 1999 and beyond.

On the other hand, the programme was needed not only for the debt problem, but also to correct the structural distortions in the Jordanian economy, which made borrowing a necessity in order

for economic life to go on uninterrupted at a level beyond our own means. The economic reform is therefore needed for our own sake and future financial security and economic viability, whether external debt was paid, unpaid or carried forward indefinitely.

The economic growth targeted by the adjustment programme, estimated at around 4 per cent per annum, will make the Jordanian economy bigger and more capable of servicing debts, if debt repayment is so much desired. The writer does not agree with those who want to repay the debts as fast as possible. The lenders are partners in responsibility for the crisis. They cannot escape the blame, together with the past Jordanian governments, which helped in reaching the point of debt crisis through reckless over-borrowing. Eventually, lenders should accept their share of responsibility of amicably giving away part of their contractual rights.

We should not forget that rescheduling of foreign debts is not applicable to all debts. Loans due to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, International Finance Corporation and all Arab funds, together with the new soft loans, will continue to be

repayable on schedule under the economic adjustment programme, and will not be deferred. Installments due to lenders who continue to extend grants and development loans to Jordan will also be paid on time in order to secure the continued flow of aid to the country.

The rough calculations we have conducted revealed that capitalisation of interest and new credit facilities will offset, and most likely exceed, repayment of previous loans. This means that the outstanding indebtedness of Jordan will stand at around \$10 billion by the end of 1998. However, we should not think only in terms of absolute figures. The projections of the programme demonstrate, in clear terms, that the outstanding indebtedness of Jordan, as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), will decline from 188 per cent in the first year of the programme (1992) to 137 per cent of GDP in the last year of the programme (1998). The relative burden of indebtedness will thus decline by 27.1 per cent, which is an achievement that deserves the effort.

Under the economic adjustment programme, we shall leave not only debts to the coming generation, we shall also leave a larger economy and a higher capacity to repay the debt.

America, oil and the new Middle East

By J. Robinson West

FOR most Americans, the dramatic breakup of the Soviet Union has been largely the story of Russia, the Ukraine and perhaps Belarus (or Byelorussia as it was formerly known).

But there is another important element there that should not be neglected in the West: the one involving the Muslim republics of Central Asia. These former Soviet republics will be moving steadily away from the European and Slavic bias of the new Commonwealth and toward their own ethnic and religious roots — and in the process, the whole Middle East will be redefined.

Many Slavs in the Commonwealth view the Muslims of the Asian steppe as backward and inferior. Slavic suspicion and contempt was demonstrated again recently when the Ukraine, Belarus and Russia established the new Commonwealth in Minsk, the western-most major city, and then invited the Asian republics to join once Slavic dominance was established.

Economically backward when they were brought into the Soviet empire, the Central Asian republics enjoyed only limited success in modernising programmes in the region, making the Muslim and Central Asian republics a net burden on the centre's budget. These republics became extremely dependent on Russia and other more industrialised regions of the Soviet Union for manufactured goods. As the Soviet government collapsed, living standards have fallen even more rapidly than in the more prosperous states of the West. At the same time these states have been left with the

centre's other contribution: ecological and economic disasters such as the large irrigation projects used to support vast areas of cash-crop production, which have poisoned the soil and emptied huge lakes.

The significance of the Muslim and Central Asian states should not be dismissed. They have a total population of 60 million. Of largely Turkic ethnicity, the vast majority of the people are Sunni Muslim, with the notable exception of Shiite Azerbaijan. Two, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, have significant oil and gas reserves. Kazakhstan, the largest of the Asian states, and Turkmenistan have 1,500 nuclear warheads (including more than 100 ICBMs), which is larger than the arsenal of France.

The Muslim and Central Asian states represent both danger and opportunity to the countries of the Middle East, prompting an intense campaign for power and influence between Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia. The outcome of that competition could determine the stability of the Middle East and the security of American oil supplies.

Aside from intense diplomatic and propaganda activity, Iran is aggressively supplying oil and credit to certain of the Asian states, and the Caspian Sea is becoming an Iranian lake. Iran is eagerly seeking a nuclear capability, and Kazakhstan could provide it. Saudi Arabia has furnished nearly \$1 billion to the republics in a play for influence on Iran's northern flank. Turkey is providing substantial manpower assistance and technical aid to the region as well. The govern-

ments of Iran and Turkey are acting because they want to expand their influence and also fear the danger of instability of the former Soviet Union spilling over their borders. The revivalist ethnic movements in some Muslim state could provide an incentive to segments of their own disgruntled citizens.

For all the danger of social upheaval or strategic manoeuvring, the opportunities are great for the governments of Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Iran could secure for itself both nuclear weapons and enormous economic and political hinterland. Turkey sees potential markets for its products and access to oil. For Saudi Arabia, there is the chance to play a wider foreign policy role in the region, partly in concert with the U.S. and partly as means to ensure leverage over Iran and other regional powers. All three are projecting their interests into an area once closed off to them, and thereby hope to enhance their current positions.

Where does all this leave the U.S.? First it must expand its concept of the Middle East to include the Asian Muslim states made up of the former Soviet Union. These states are not European; they are culturally and geographically closer to the Middle East. From this new and expanded perspective, the future oil supplies and its security takes on a more complicated meaning.

In the past, the West has feared, political upheavals in the countries bordering the oil states of the gulf as potentially disruptive to the world's major source of oil. Similarly, the dangers of nuclear



proliferation, difficult enough during the cold war, will require a heightened sensitivity to the new alliances being developed in this expanded region.

Second, the U.S. has to develop a more realistic relationship with all of the major countries in the region. While the U.S. has excellent ties with Saudi Arabia and Turkey, relations with Iran languish in mutual distrust. Concrete steps should be taken soon to end the climate of hostility that

dominates America's relationship with Iran. An isolated Iran outside the community of nations is far more likely to be aggressive and destabilising in the Middle East.

Third, U.S. government assistance to the newly independent Muslim and Central Asian states would reduce their economic and political isolation. The promise of wider recognition and assistance — not necessarily through aid but trade and commodity finance and

technical advice, may lower the risk that they would leverage their strategic assets for short-term financial gain.

Exactly one year ago the U.S. and its allies were building up forces in the Middle East to protect the stability of the region. A new Middle East, larger and more complex than before, is now emerging. The U.S. and its allies must begin to think and act accordingly — The Washington Post.

Bush facing tough campaign as economy batters popularity

By Robert Doherty
Reuters

WASHINGTON — President George Bush, who until recently seemed assured of re-election, now faces a tough campaign to retain the White House because of a stagnant U.S. economy that has sent his popularity plunging.

Mr. Bush's collapse with the flu in Tokyo gives a new line of attack for Democratic candidates to challenge him and adds to a perception that a president who had a record popularity rating may now be vulnerable.

Despite the seemingly minor nature of the ailment that felled him at a Tokyo banquet, Mr. Bush's collapse swiftly focused attention on Vice President Dan Quayle, who has struggled to prove himself a worthy presidential stand-in.

The "Quayle factor" and the dormant U.S. economy, which has sent Mr. Bush's approval rating tumbling from a post-Gulf war high of 91 per cent to the 50 per cent range, has given new hope to the six major Democratic presidential candidates.

The economy, in particular, has forced Mr. Bush on the defensive as Democrats charge he is paying too much attention to foreign affairs at the expense of U.S. domestic ills.

But the economy has not been Mr. Bush's only recent problem. Former White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, whose abrasive personality made many enemies, was forced out late last year after a series of gaffes that started with indiscreet travel at public and corporate expense.

Mr. Bush moved quickly to quell any image of disarray at the White House, naming low-key Samuel Skinner, his transportation secretary, to replace Mr. Sununu and steady the White House as the 1992 re-election campaign gets under way.

Mr. Bush is expected to formally announce his bid for a second term in the next few weeks but in what could be a

prophetic comment as recently as Wednesday morning, the president said only health problems would prevent him from running again.

His current political predicament is a far cry from last summer when, thanks to a few months of war in a faraway place, he was riding gusts of patriotic pride to popularity at home and a muscular new image as political superman.

Even months after military victory in the Gulf, with euphoria deflated by the endurance of Iraq's Saddam Hussein and a host of postwar problems, Mr. Bush's approval rating stood at a robust 76 per cent in an ABC-Washington Post poll.

Mr. Bush's popularity had eclipsed even his predecessor Ronald Reagan, a sabre-rattling anticommunist who during his eight years in office became the symbol of mailed-fist use of power.

At the same time MR. Bush, an upper-crust Yale with the preppy nickname "poppy", cast aside a longtime political image as an indecisive wimp.

Mr. Reagan talked tough and frightened people but used military force relatively sparingly in his eight years. Mr. Bush, in his first two years in office, sent paratroops to overthrow Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega in December 1989 provided air cover to help Philippine President Corason Aquino survive a coup in late 1989 and sent troops to El Salvador to rescue some Americans during another 1989 crisis.

Then came Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990. Mr. Bush's strong response, the eventual allied victory in forcing out Iraqi troops, and the surge in the president's popularity.

George Herbert Walker Bush was born on June 12, 1924, in Milton, Massachusetts, the son of financier Prescott Bush — later a senator from Connecticut — and Dorothy Bush.

He had a patrician upbringing

in Greenwich, Connecticut and was educated at private schools and Yale University. He is a millionaire both in his own right and by inheritance.

A tall, athletic man with a friendly manner, Mr. Bush always sets a hectic pace. He is fond of jogging, fast boats, pitching horseshoes, hunting and fishing.

He left school at 18 to become the navy's youngest pilot in World War II. He flew 58 missions off carriers in the Pacific, was shot down at sea and was decorated for valor.

As the war was nearing an end in January 1945, Mr. Bush married sweetheart Barbara Pierce. They now have five grown children, the oldest in his 40s, and 12 grandchildren.

After World War II, Mr. Bush rejected a Wall Street job and moved to Texas and made a fortune in oil-drilling.

He began a rise to national prominence by winning elections to the House of Representatives from Texas in 1966 and 1968. But he failed in two bids at a Texas Senate seat.

Although Mr. Bush generally espoused middle-road positions, he did support the Vietnam war effort. That caught the eye of then-President Richard Nixon, who brought him to the national stage as ambassador to the United Nations in 1971 and Republican Party chairman in 1973, a hot-seat in an era when the Watergate scandal was erupting.

After Mr. Nixon's resignation in 1974, President Gerald Ford named Mr. BUSH TO HEAD THE U.S. liaison office in China from 1974 TO 1975 and to direct the scandal-plagued CIA in 1976-77.

His big step towards the pinnacle of power came in the 1980 presidential campaign and involved a stroke of luck.

He was the only Republican to defeat MR. Reagan in several primary elections, but Mr. Reagan swept him aside too.

One year after war, Kuwait at crossroads

By Diana Elias
The Associated Press

KUWAIT — The Iraqis are gone. The oil wells are no longer aflame, and many are producing oil. Al Sabah family is back in power.

In some ways, Kuwait is back to where it was 18 months ago, before Saddam Hussein's troops invaded. But in many ways, there is no going back.

"We're at the crossroads," said Abdullah Al Shayji, a political science lecturer at Kuwait University.

"The Gulf war transformed Kuwait into another place in every sense of the word. We're trying to find out where we fit in and what we want. Do we want to become more Westernised or more Islamic?"

Al Shayji, a 34-year-old self-described liberal who specialises in U.S. foreign policy, said that the West's support and the Americanisation of this traditional Muslim society have produced an identity crisis for many people.

Young Kuwaiti men who fled into exile and many of those who stayed during the seven-month occupation are casting aside the old values.

"They're shedding their traditional dishdasha robes for jeans, demanding to be allowed to date girls in public and agitating for a new order."

"The Gulf war has turned the people of the Gulf into hostages... of the West," former legislator Abdulla Al Nafisi grumbled in the independent Al Qabas daily recently.

"The American bumper stickers on our cars, the American and British flags on our houses and Bush's photos in our offices are nothing but signs of psychological defeat," he said. "Our dependence on the West is a disgrace."

"This is a part of the long bill we have to pay for the Islamic Constitution Movement, which advocates a return to the Sharia, or Muslim religious law. On the other hand, many

women, traditionally disenfranchised, are demanding the right to vote and run for public office.

The emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah, has promised to study the matter, a tricky issue in the Gulf monarchies where in some countries there is no vote.

Since the 1960s, the country has been gradually moving away from the tribal structure that has been the main social pillar for centuries. The pace of social change has quickened in the last few years as young men educated abroad widened their horizons. The war dramatically accelerated the process.

The emir has pledged to hold

elections next October for the National Assembly, which he dissolved in 1986 for the second time because it was growing too independent. The Assembly was the first experiment in parliamentary government in the Gulf's Arab states, where monarchs still reign.

Outwardly, Kuwait is returning to something like normality.

Utilities are functioning again. The oilfield fires set by the Iraqis were finally put out in November. The oil industry, Kuwait's economic lifeline, is producing about 400,000 barrels a day, less than one-third of prewar output.

But resentment simmers not far below the surface.

LETTERS

Read again

To the Editor:

In the coverage of the press conference held by the director general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) published in the Jordan Times on Jan. 7, the last paragraph should have read as follows:

"Dr. Toukan, while answering many questions from the press, indicated that the issue of non-Arab participation at the AFM was a matter of the official economic policy of Jordan and thus the prime minister's office is the competent authority to comment on this subject. Dr. Toukan went on to say that the present practice allows non-Arabs to trade in the AFM after getting approval from the Prime Ministry."

Dr. Umaysya Toukan,
General Manager,
Amman Financial Market.

Editor's note: The original paragraph reads as follows: Dr. Toukan, while answering many questions from the press, directed one to the prime minister for an answer: "When will Jordan allow non-Arabs to invest in Jordanian shares freely, without even the routine approval of the prime minister?"

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Bilaterals begin tomorrow

(Continued from page 1)

Arab delegates and other observers.

The settlement issue in particular is explosive to the Israelis, since its future depends on the Israeli request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees to absorb Jewish immigrants, which is being heatedly debated in the U.S. these days (see story below). It is also a crucial issue upon which the future of the Shamir government will be decided, according to pro-Israel lobbyists in Washington.

The Arab side wants the question to be tackled immediately, and the Palestinians are already threatening to abandon the talks should the Bush administration decide to grant the loan guarantees albeit with conditions.

"It will be futile for us to continue with the negotiations if the Americans decide to give the Israelis the money they want especially when they can't get settlement building stopped," one senior Palestinian delegate said.

"The loan guarantees are the one weapon we have got left."

Should (President) Bush decide to go ahead with them, no matter under what conditions, we will simply have to give up."

In his letter to Dr. Majali and Dr. Shafi, the chief Israeli delegate indicated that the Israelis could not be staying in Washington beyond Jan. 15 and that the Arabs by showing up late for the talks, were responsible for wasting valuable time that could have been used for negotiations. But, while describing the Israeli letter as "undiplomatic" and "rude" for blaming the Arabs "for not respecting agreements," Arab delegates generally expected that the Israelis would eventually decide to stay for several more days at least, with the Syrians indicating that Washington would continue to serve as the venue for the talks.

According to informed sources, however, the U.S. wants the next round to be held elsewhere, most probably in Europe, apparently because this is a sensitive year for American politics and partly because it wants to avoid raising controversial decisions such as granting visas to PLO officials and the possibility of reestablishing contacts with the organisation.

Jordanian delegation sources say the question of venue will be on the agenda of the talks, and they expect that "Lausanne" in Switzerland or Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, are the strongest candidates so far to host the next round, if and when it is held.

In any event, the third round would have to end by the third week of January — assuming that the Israelis decide to stay beyond Jan. 15 or 16 — since the multilateral regional talks are still scheduled for Moscow on Jan.

28-29.

In briefing reporters last week, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler announced that Secretary of State James Baker and his Russian counterpart Andrei Kozyrev had made contact over the issue earlier on, and the two agreed that the talks should take place as scheduled in the Russian capital.

There were reports in Washington prior to that which said the multilateral negotiations could be postponed for several weeks due to the fact that heads of governments of members of the Security Council group's meeting is now set for Jan. 31, instead of the originally touted date of Jan. 28, which would allow for travel arrangements for some participants as the case may be.

Agencies add: The bilateral talks, inaugurated by the Madrid Middle East peace conference last October, adjourned in Washington on Dec. 18 after six days of discussions.

Their resumption was delayed for five days beyond plans after Israel announced it was expelling 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories. Arab delegates delayed their arrival in Washington until the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution strongly condemning the expulsions.

In occupied Jerusalem, several dozen Palestinian women demonstrated against Arab-Israeli peace talks on Saturday, and Palestinians clashed with Israeli troops in several towns in the occupied territories.

The women called on Palestinians to withdraw from talks with Israel and protested at the Israeli decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Palestinians said police fired rubber bullets to disperse the demonstrators and arrested two women, beating one of them.

Israel radio said two policemen were lightly injured.

In Khan Yunis in the occupied Gaza Strip, soldiers shot and critically wounded Fadel Abu Halib, 22, Palestinian source said. Residents of the town took Mr. Halib to a local hospital but soldiers stormed the building and arrested him.

Ten Palestinians were arrested in Gaza City in clashes with soldiers, Palestinian sources said.

In the occupied West Bank, Palestinians threw two petrol bombs at an army patrol in Jenin. The bombs ignited on the street, causing no damage.

Soldiers imposed a curfew on Ramallah, north of Jerusalem, following clashes between soldiers and Palestinians.

Kuwait story fabricated

(Continued from page 1)

Kuwaiti girl testified before a United States congressional human rights caucus on Oct. 10, 1990: "I saw the Iraqi soldiers come into the hospital with guns, and go into the room where 15 babies were in incubators. They took the babies out of the incubators, took the incubators and left the babies on the cold floor to die," she was quoted as saying by Amnesty.

Amnesty later retracted the account but U.S. public opinion and Congress were already mobilised to give President George Bush the mandate to attack Iraq.

What was not known at the time and has only now been revealed is that the girl was the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to Washington, Saud Nasir Al Sabah. She was known to the media and the caucus only as Nayirah in order to protect her identity.

In her testimony Nayirah said she was working as a volunteer at Al Addan Hospital at the time, but no one has corroborated that her whereabouts in August and September was indeed Kuwait.

A Jan. 6 article written by John MacArthur in the New York Times revealed that Nayirah was introduced to the caucus through Hill and Knowlton, the public relations firm hired by the Kuwaitis for lobbying the U.S. Congress for military intervention against Iraq.

Nayirah's story has been called

a "fabrication" not only by the Amman-based Palestinian doctor, but also by many others.

A report on the "Human Rights Abuses and Effects on the Health Care System During and After the Iraqi Occupation of Kuwait" was compiled by the British chapter of Physicians for Human Rights. The physicians conducted their investigative mission during the second week of March 1991. Their report concluded that "no evidence was found to substantiate the widely publicised claims of premature infants being taken out of incubators and left to die. No evidence was found of incubators being looted although evidence emerged that other medical equipment was removed from some hospitals."

The two-man British team visited nine main hospitals in Kuwait including Al Addan.

The findings were corroborated when ABC Television news reporter John Martin interviewed staff who remained in the hospitals throughout the occupation and who testified that they knew of no such occurrences.

The revelation by numerous sources that the incubator story was untrue leaves investigators to find out if Nayirah was really in Kuwait at the time and why she testified as she did in front of the caucus.

"Furthermore it leaves the world to wonder what role the incubator story played in swinging world opinion into the war mood against Iraq," concluded the Amman-based physician.

'Multilaterals long-sought forum'

(Continued from page 1)

assistance to the public.

The King called on citizens to shoulder their responsibilities during difficult times and extend cooperation as well as to learn from experiences.

Other issues touched upon during the Cabinet session chaired by the King included public administration reforms. The King urged

the government to ensure that the right people were given the right jobs, away from bureaucracy and favouritism.

The King also called on the government to pursue enhanced cooperation with the legislative authority and to present to the public the facts about every issue which affect the citizens' life since they have the right to know the reasons behind any decisions.

Libya urged to cooperate in cases

(Continued from page 1)

full and effective response to those requests so as to contribute to the elimination of international terrorism.

It urges all states individually and collectively to encourage Libya to respond effectively to the requests.

At the same time Secretary-General Butros Ghali wrote to all 166 members of the United Nations on whether to hold a General Assembly session on the problem of international terrorism.

Libya had requested such a session, and Dr. Butros Ghali is obligated to poll members to see if a majority agrees.

Libya, which has denied its government was involved in the bombings, has suggested a neutral international tribunal try the case.

Ali Ahmad Elhouderi, Libya's U.N. ambassador, also said Tripoli would welcome the participation of Western judges and investigators in its probe of the case.

The Security Council draft resolution is expected to come to a vote next week.

firming the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the Israeli occupied territories.

Another challenge facing the Arab delegations is to ensure that the course of the bilateral talks, specifically on the Palestinian-Israeli talks, will strengthen the Arab position at the multilateral talks, scheduled to be held in Moscow Jan. 28-29.

If the Palestinian role is not clearly defined at the bilateral talks and a linkage is not established between the interim period and a final solu-

tion, Israel will definitely seek to include the issue of Palestinian refugees as an issue to be settled between Israel and the Arab governments hosting the refugees.

In practical terms, Arab negotiators fear, such an arrangement will give Israel a chance, to evade U.N. resolutions that call for the return of the Palestinian refugees displaced in 1948 and 1967 to their homes or for payment of compensation to them. Israel will seek to force the permanent settling of the refugees in the host coun-

tries, the negotiators fear.

The Arab parties have failed to reach a united stand so far on whether or not to attend the multilateral talks, which will deal with security arrangements and practical steps to end the state of war between the Arab World and Israel. Some of them have conditioned their attendance at the Moscow talks on progress achieved at the bilaterals.

The level of inter-Arab coordination has become closer since they took a unified

Loan guarantee key factor

(Continued from page 1)

debate and that it will work the issue with the government of Israel. Pro-Israel activists have taken a low profile on the issue and have decided against openly lobbying Congress over the administration's head. There is a realisation that Congress cannot in defiance of the administration impose its will on the issue because lawmakers will probably not be able to muster a two-thirds majority to override the president should he decide to veto the loan guarantee legislation.

The administration has made no secret of its support for the principle of absorption aid to Israel.

"In our view the immigration of Soviet Jews is a humanitarian issue of great importance," Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asia Edward Djerejian told members of Congress in November 1991. "We reaffirm our support for the principle of absorption aid to Israel and will support loan guarantees for that purpose, provided acceptable terms and conditions are worked out when Congress takes up the matter" at the end of January.

The question that remains is whether the understanding agreement between the administration and the government of Israel will be an official and public or a "behind the scenes" type of deal.

According to the Washington Jewish Week, the administration is still developing its options and will decide on its conditions for supporting the loan guarantees within a week to ten days.

"Those conditions will be the basis for quiet negotiations between Israel and the administration," the Jewish Week reported in its Jan. 9 edition.

Thomas Friedman, who writes for the New York Times and who by and large reflects Secretary of State James Baker's thinking on foreign policy issues, wrote last week (Jan. 5, 1992) that while no decision has been made regarding Israel's request, the Bush administration intends to demand "certain restrictions as a precondition to granting the guarantees. He outlined the three options that are, from the point of view of pro-Israeli lobbyists, available to the administration with regards to the loan guarantees:

1. That the president would postpone debate over the issue. This option would put the Democratic sponsors of the Israeli request in the uncomfortable position of having to take the lead in sponsoring a major foreign aid programme in the middle of an election year with the economy in recession.

2. That the administration would support part or all of the loan guarantees while insisting that they be granted only on condition that Israel totally freeze all settlement building activity in the West Bank and Gaza. The problem with this option, as Mr. Friedman sees it, is that it colours the U.S. role as "honest broker" in the negotiations by forcing Israel to freeze settlements instead of leaving the issue to be negotiated with the Arabs.

3. That the U.S. would agree to limited guarantees on the condition that an amount equivalent to what Israel spends on settlements in the West Bank and Gaza be deducted each year from the total. According to Mr. Friedman, this option seems to be gaining the most support in Congress.

Pro-Israeli analysts such as Martin Indyk of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy outlined the following scenarios in a press briefing given last week at the institute:

1. The "nothing-happens" scenario, as Mr. Indyk put it, where the president and Congress avoid the issue for the time being and where Israel can state that it will go ahead with the absorption of Soviet Jewish immigrants without assistance from the U.S.

2. The Israeli government makes some concession on settlements thereby satisfying President Bush's concern on the issue so that the administration can go ahead with the first \$2 billion tranche. That, by Mr. Indyk's admission, is not a likely scenario.

3. The most likely scenario — a middle-way alternative — is the "Leahy formula for deductibility," where the administration goes ahead with the guarantees but deducts the amount which Israel spends on settlements. That, according to Mr. Indyk, enables the president to say he did something for Soviet Jews but at the same time preserved his principle. He would also be able to tell the Arab side that the U.S. is not paying for settlement activity in the occupied territories. Congress can also claim it did something for Israel in an election year.

Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) chairman of the Senate Appropriations Sub-committee on Foreign Operations which must approve the guarantees, has told the administration he wants to meet with President Bush on the issue before any final decisions are made, according to Jewish activists quoted in this week's Jewish Week.

Pro-Israel Jewish activists and congressional sources quoted in the newspaper say that even if Israel were forced to accept the Leahy formula, implementing it is likely to open up sensitive new areas of dispute. Among these is what formula would be used in determining Israeli expenditures in the territories. It would also have to be determined whether or not the calculations would include expenditures on Jerusalem.

A report in Thursday's Washington Post said two opposition members of Israel's Knesset released documents prepared by Israel's housing ministry showing that 18,273 housing units were started in West Bank settlements alone. The housing ministry said it was simply carrying out decisions made by the government. The report points out that the construction programme which Israel launched after receiving the \$400 million in loan guarantees from the U.S. in 1990 is seen by some U.S. officials as violating the agreement between the U.S. and Israeli governments.

According to Jewish Week, members of the American Jewish community believe that Israel would gladly accept the scenario where the administration would support a one-year \$2 billion loan guarantee, leaving the question of later guarantees and possible conditions hanging over Israel's head for the future.

What is certain is that although the American Jewish community continues to view the loan guarantee among its highest priorities, American Jewish leaders are not, this time around, willing to challenge the administration through Congress. That much has already been demonstrated by the conspicuous absence of a

grass-roots campaign in support of the guarantees as was the case in September 1991 when the issue was first to be debated.

Unlike the fall of 1991, newspapers across the U.S. are not carrying advertisements by Jewish American organisations arguing for the loan guarantees. Analysts point to the fact that the pro-Israel lobbying machine adopted a head-on course with President Bush over the issue last time around and lost conclusively has rendered American Jewish activists unwilling to undertake another potential defeat and embarrassment. For example, Jewish Week last time around carried numerous articles discussing mass mobilisation efforts by American Jews who sought to portray the issue of Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel as a "humanitarian" one, unrelated to politics and to the

peace process. As Mr. Friedman pointed out, many prominent American Jews who actively lobbied the administration for the guarantees back in September have now adopted a much more "low-key" approach to the issue. "They realise that pro-Israel members of Congress cannot pass the guarantees without President Bush's endorsement, and therefore the Israelis are simply going to have to negotiate with Mr. Bush about his terms," Mr. Friedman wrote. He quoted Abraham Foxman, the executive director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, as saying "domestic concerns mandate a lower profile in support of the guarantees. It would be counterproductive to have a debate on the issue at this time. We are saying to our government (the U.S.) and the Israeli government 'work it out.'"

Syrian paper says Israeli raid threatens peace talks

DAMASCUS (Agencies) —

Syria said Saturday an Israeli air raid on South Lebanon in which 12 people were killed was aimed at aborting the Middle East peace process.

The daily Tishreen said: "Whenever there is a glimpse of hope for activating the peace process Israel brings pessimism with its aggressive measures either in the occupied territories or in Lebanon."

It called for action to "deter Israeli aggressive acts" in order to push forward the peace process.

"In the absence of international action against Israel's aggressive acts, the government of (Israeli Prime Minister) Yitzhak Shamir will continue its actions to abort the peace process," Tishreen said.

Israeli gunners and their militia allies shelled an area of South Lebanon overnight, hours after the raid which killed 12 people, security sources said Saturday.

Several artillery shells fired from Israeli-held territory in South Lebanon crashed into Iqim Al Toufah region, 20 kilometres south of Beirut, a

mountainous ridge used by pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) guerrillas, they said.

There were no reports of casualties in the shelling which died down before dawn.

On Thursday, Israeli planes launched their first raid into Lebanon this year, bombing guerrilla targets of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) near the village of Na'ameh, 15 kilometres south of Beirut.

But two rockets fired by the raiding planes hit a nearby bedouin camp. The raid killed 12 people, including five women and four children at the camp, and wounded 14.

Some 1,000 Israeli troops back the 3,000-strong South Lebanon Army (SLA) in controlling a 15-kilometre wide "security zone" in South Lebanon.

Anguished relatives and friends on Saturday buried the victims of Friday's raid.

Survivors searched through the debris of their devastated homes as the victims were buried in a graveyard a few metres away.

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Washington round crucial

(Continued from page 1)

to Palestinian sources, have already asked both the Israelis and the Palestinians to table models for Palestinian self-rule.

In order to block expected Israeli efforts to prevent such a linkage — which will boost prospects for the interim period to become a permanent status — the Palestinians will present a model for self-rule based on United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338 and the Fourth Geneva Con-

vention.

The latter is particularly crucial to force Israel to stop any measures, including the building of settlements in the occupied Arab territories and the expulsion of Palestinians and other similar practices that can alter the Palestinian identity of the occupied territories and determine the outcome of the negotiations.

The Palestinian position was boosted last week by U.N. Security Council Resolution 726, which reaf-

firmed the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the Israeli occupied territories.

Another challenge facing the Arab delegations is to ensure that the course of the bilateral talks, specifically on the Palestinian-Israeli talks, will strengthen the Arab position at the multilateral talks, scheduled to be held in Moscow Jan. 28-29.

If the Palestinian role is not clearly defined at the bilateral talks and a linkage is not established between the interim period and a final solu-

tion, Israel will definitely seek to include the issue of Palestinian refugees as an issue to be settled between Israel and the Arab governments hosting the refugees.

In practical terms, Arab negotiators fear, such an arrangement will give Israel a chance, to evade U.N. resolutions that call for the return of the Palestinian refugees displaced in 1948 and 1967 to their homes or for payment of compensation to them. Israel will seek to force the permanent settling of the refugees in the host coun-

tries, the negotiators fear.

The Arab parties have failed to reach a united stand so far on whether or not to attend the multilateral talks, which will deal with security arrangements and practical steps to end the state of war between the Arab World and Israel. Some of them have conditioned their attendance at the Moscow talks on progress achieved at the bilaterals.

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tion, Israel will definitely seek to include the issue of Palestinian refugees as an issue to be settled between Israel and the Arab governments hosting the refugees.

Sanchez beats Forget for New South Wales Open men's title

SYDNEY (AP) — Playing nearly flawless tennis, No. 7-seeded Emilio Sanchez of Spain upset defending champion Guy Forget 6-3, 6-4 Saturday to win the men's section of the \$560,000 New South Wales Open.

His sister, No. 2-seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, advanced to Sunday's women's final by out-gunning No. 8 Anke Huber of Germany 4-6, 7-5, 6-3 in a two-hour, seesaw battle. She will face top-seeded Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina, who overpowered mistake-plagued American Mary Joe Fernandez, the No. 4 seed, 6-2, 6-3.

Bright sunshine finally prevailed on the rebound ace courts at the White City Complex in midtown Sydney after a week of unseasonably cool and rainy weather played havoc with the schedule.

The 26-year-old Sanchez, ranked 15th in the world, did not drop a set in five matches in cruising to his 15th career singles title. He won \$33,800.

"When I came here, I was expecting to perfect my timing," Sanchez said. "Slowly I started to play better. Today was my best match. I'm very happy with my form."

Forget, the third seed and

ranked seventh in the world, surpassed \$3 million in career winnings with the second prize of \$19,900.

He rode his powerful serve and crisp ground strokes through four matches but faltered slightly against Sanchez, who also cranked up his own serve. The leader on the men's tour in aces last year, Forget didn't get his first until the second set.

Forget's only chance came at 2-2 in the second set. But Sanchez fended off the only five break points he faced to move ahead 3-2, then broke Forget's next serve to take control.

Forget said he was bothered by a nagging elbow problem that has him considering whether to play doubles at the Australian Open, the two-week Grand Slam event that starts next week in Melbourne.

"The more I serve, the more it inflames," he said. "I didn't have as much strength as usual."

Forget said he was also distracted by the news Friday that he's matched against fellow French Davis Cup hero and doubles partner Henri Leconte in the first round at the Australian Open.

"I'm already mentally into that match," he said. "I wish they

would have done the draw later." Sabatini, traditionally a baseline player, has been working to become more aggressive and said the key to her victory was moving to the net, where she put pressure on Fernandez.

"I did it pretty well," she said. "Coming to the net made her make mistakes. I feel much more comfortable. Mentally, I have the confidence."

Although Fernandez got early service breaks in both sets, she kept hitting wide, long and into the net. She committed 28 unforced errors to 11 for Sabatini, who ran off the last five games of each set.

Sanchez Vicario advanced to the finals for the second straight year after subduing the 17-year-old Huber in an exhibition of aggressive tennis that had the crowd giving both players a standing ovation afterward.

Each woman put constant pressure on the other's serve, combining for 11 service breaks and 29 break points. Out of the first 22 games, there were break opportunities in 15.

Huber's powerful ground strokes had Sanchez Vicario constantly running and lunging to counter-punch with a combination of lobs and passing shots.

But while Huber was going for winners, her screaming topspins left little margin for mistakes. She wound up with 66 unforced errors to 42 for Sanchez Vicario.

The toll finally caught up with Huber when she served for the second set at 5-4 after a controversial line call went against Sanchez Vicario. Huber missed lines twice by inches, hit one of her 27 winners, netted a forehand then missed a line again.

Sanchez Vicario won the last three games of the set and eight of nine overall to take command at 5-1 in the deciding set. Huber, still playing aggressive, fought back to 5-3 before Sanchez Vicario held serve for the match.

Sanchez Vicario said the line call psyched her up.

"It helped me. After that, I won four in a row. After I won the second set, I knew the match was in my hands," said Sanchez Vicario, who ran to the stands after the final point to kiss her parents.

"I played a great match in the first two sets," Huber said while praising Sanchez's refusal to give up. "She gets so many balls that other players just look at. If you play against Arantxa, you never think about winning the match."

Yamaguchi waltzes her way to the lead in U.S.

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Kristi Yamaguchi found the perfect steps at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, waltzing her way to the lead Friday night.

Skating elegantly to Blue Danube, Yamaguchi waltzed cleanly through the original programme. Her routine flowed and Yamaguchi was more expressive and in contact with the crowd than usual. The defending world champion received a full board of 5.98 for presentation.

"Overall, I felt comfortable with it and I can't ask for more right now," Yamaguchi said. "Actually, I felt tonight a little shaky. The combination could have been a little better."

While Yamaguchi, 20, of Fremont, California, was winning the original programme, worth one-third of the total score, defending national titlist Tonya Harding struggled. She fell on her trademark triple axel, which she planned to do in combination, and was fortunate to finish third.

Harding then revealed she injured a tendon in her right foot at a morning practice.

"Up until this morning I had been landing it all the time," she said when asked if the inflamed tendon affected her on the triple axel. "I came down and couldn't hold my foot."

Nancy Kerrigan, the world and national bronze medalist, was in total control of her routine and wound up second.

"It didn't really bother me to skate in the beginning," said Kerrigan, who went second out of 21 skaters. "Once I am out there, I am out to do what I have to do."

The free skate will be held Saturday night, with the top three women to be named to the Olympic team. If anyone other than Yamaguchi, Harding and Kerrigan sneaks in, it would be a major surprise.

April Sargent-Thomas, three weeks from surgery for an ovarian cyst, and Russ Withersby won the dance. The couple, runners-up last three years, won the free dance Friday night. Sargent-Thomas also had won the original dance and tied for first in

the compulsory dance with Rachel Mayer and Peter Breen. Mayer-Breen was a surprising second, grabbing the other Olympic berth — only two American dance couples will go to France. Mayer and Breen were just sixth in last year's nationals.

Equally surprising was the failure of defending champions Elizabeth Punsalan and Jerod Swallow to make the Olympic team. They wound up third.

As for the men, it was Bowman the showman, again.

For those who wondered which Christopher Bowman would show up — and that meant everyone — it was the Bowman who can put all the elements together.

The 1989 national champion, who has been unpredictable throughout a career that most recently seemed headed straight downhill, won the original programme portion of the competition Friday.

"I think the hardships I've faced and the not really appropriate — for lack of a better word — media attention I've received this probably caused me a little pain, given me a lot of doubts and pressure," Bowman said.

"I always was taught to take that and make it the utmost of productive work."

He did so with a superb technical performance. He did it with just enough flair and drama, and with the usual theatrics.

When the 24-year-old from Los Angeles had completed a massive triple lutz-triple toe loop combination and a skywalking triple flip, when all the footwork was done and all the spins completed, Bowman mugged for a television camera as he pointed at it and shouted.

"It's not very personable when the audience is up above and looking into this pit," Bowman said. "It's like the snooker championship of the world and not the most uplifting atmosphere."

"The only thing I could relate to was the camera."

Seconds later, when his routine ended, as he sat to be interviewed by ABC commentator Julie Moran, he hugged her and tried to kiss her as she laughed.

CAF backs S. Africa's return to world soccer

DAKAR (R) — The African Football Confederation (CAF) has recommended South Africa's return to the international soccer fold after a 34-year absence.

Delegates at CAF's Assembly in Senegal voted unanimously to urge soccer's world governing body, FIFA, to admit the South African Football Association (SAFA) as a full member.

"This is the best thing that has happened to our football with the total support of all CAF members," a jubilant Solomon Morewa, the SAFA general secretary, said.

Delegates said FIFA was certain to accept the CAF recommendation at its next congress in July.

South Africa was thrown out of FIFA in 1958 because of its apartheid racial policies.

"FIFA has always said it would abide by CAF's decision. But it is clear that FIFA would be more than happy to re-admit South Africa because of the political changes in our country and the reunification of football on non-racial grounds," Morewa said.

The rapid pace of political reforms in South Africa has allowed other sports bodies to return to international competition. Friday's move was significant because of the popularity of soccer among all races in South Africa.

The CAF General Assembly, meeting two days before the start of the African Nations' Cup finals in Senegal, also voted to stage the next tournament in Tunisia in 1994.

Zaire was due to host the 1994 finals but delegates were swayed by the chronic political instability in the central African country

whose main cities were devastated by army-led looting last year.

Delegates accepted Namibia as an associate member of CAF and re-appointed Issa Hayatou of Niger as the secretary general of the Cairo-based organization.

Meanwhile Cameroon, popular quarterfinalists at the 1990 World Cup in Italy, will start among the favorites when the 18th African Nations' Cup finals kick-off in Dakar Sunday.

But the threat of rebel attack in Senegal's southern Casamance region where two killings were reported this week, could undermine the competition and confound Cameroon's ambitions.

African soccer administrators, who hope to see the continent hosting a World Cup finals series in the future, are anxious to put on a spectacular show and insist the tournament will proceed without interruption.

The lions, inspired by veteran striker Roger Milla, were the first African team to reach the last eight of the World Cup and will be expected to live up to their billing as the leaders of the rapidly-improving African game.

But they face a tough time from rivals Egypt, Ghana, Algeria, Nigeria and hosts Senegal as the finals are expanded to include 12 nations for the first time.

Cameroon, who have won two of the last nine titles, begin their campaign in Dakar where the tournament will start with first round matches in Groups A and B Sunday while Groups C and D, based in the southern city of Ziguinchor, begin their games Monday.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Washington wins in N. Zealand

AUCKLAND (R) — Seventh seeded American Malivi Washington cruised into the final of the \$182,000 ATP Men's Tennis Tournament after an easy straight sets win over Markus Zöcke of Germany Saturday. Washington broke the big-hitting German qualifier in the first game and set the tone for the match. His all-round game and finishing strength were just too good for Zöcke, who could not get his big serve working in the first set. He rediscovered some of his accuracy in the second, but Washington was also parading a lethal serve and dished up three consecutive aces to finish off the match 6-2, 6-4. The superbly-fit Washington will meet Peruvian Jaime Yzaga, who disposed of Canadian Grant Connell 6-4, 6-2 Saturday, in the final Sunday.

Dhofar out of Oman championship

MUSCAT (AP) — A free-for-all broke out after a 1-1 draw between hosts Dhofar and Qatari Al Rayan Friday in the Gulf Club Soccer Championship. Players punched and kicked each other until the police restored order. The tie meant Dhofar was effectively ousted from the title race. The championship, which ends Jan. 14, groups Al Jahra of Kuwait, West Rifa of Bahrain, Hilal of Saudi Arabia and Shabab of the United Arab Emirates. Dhofar now has three points from four matches and at the most can take their tally to five after the last match against Jahra Tuesday. Dhofar's Abdul Latif Nasib prodded an 11th minute goal to fire up the home supporters. Rayan neutralised the lead in the 49th minute through their substitute midfielder Salem Ahmad. Ahmad picked up a rebound after Ali Mohammad failed to hit into the empty net. In an earlier match, the Emirates club kept its hopes alive with a 3-0 victory over the Kuwaitis. Isa Sangour gave Shabab the lead in the 20th minute and Bakht Saad found the target in the injury time tagged on before the break. Saad's brother, Khamis, hit the roof of the net in the 47th minute.

'Yugoslavia will not miss Europe finals'

BELGRADE (R) — A Yugoslav team will compete in this year's European Soccer Championship finals in spite of the fighting at home, a senior football official said Saturday. "There has been speculation about the possible replacement of our team with the Danish one, but this is nonsense," the International Secretary of the Yugoslav Federation, Dusan Marovic, told Reuters. "We are okay according to all UEFA rules. Yugoslavia as Yugoslavia is still a member of the U.N. and FIFA and the attempts of some people to wipe us from the map have nothing to do with the sport." Mr. Marovic was reacting to remarks by UEFA President Lennart Johansson who was quoted as saying earlier this week that the conflict over the independence of Croatia would prevent a Yugoslav team taking part in the finals in Sweden. If Yugoslavia did not compete in the finals, which start on June 10, Denmark would take their place after finishing second in the qualifying group.

Lawrence sets new 1,500-metre walk record

HAMILTON (AP) — Debbi Lawrence of the United States broke her own world record in the women's 1,500-metre walk and American Jon Drummond set a meet record in the 50-metre sprint Friday night at the Hamilton Spectator Indoor Games. American Dan O'Brien, the world's top decathlete, pulled out of the makeshift triathlon after two events. He said he was feeling woozy after winning the shot put and high jump. "I've been run down the last little while," he said. "My doctor told me I shouldn't run." American Robert Pendergrist won with 225.30 points. Rich Heskeith of Canada was second with 208.70 and Garth Peete of Canada, a last-minute replacement for Britain's Daley Thompson, was third with 194. Lawrence, 30, set the mark in 5 minutes 54.31 seconds, breaking her previous mark of 5:54.35. Drummond won in a race that began with two false starts.

Auriol leads in Paris-Cape Town Rally

PARIS (R) — Frenchman Hubert Auriol retained his overall lead when the Paris-Cape Town Rally resumed after a two-day break with the 441-km 14th stage through the Angolan mountains Friday. With less than a week to go before the finish, Auriol cautiously watched his closest rival, fellow Mitsubishi driver Erwin Weber, whom he leads by over 10 minutes, and was content to finish eight seconds behind him in fourth place. Finland's Ari Vatanen in a Citroen scored his fifth stage win in the 151-km timed section, finishing 26 seconds ahead of French team mate Pierre Larigue. Weber was third, two minutes 26 seconds behind Vatanen. "Japan's Kenjiro Shinozuka maintained Mitsubishi's stranglehold on the rally by retaining third place overall, nearly 24 minutes behind Auriol."

Japanese dominate in ski jump

SAPPORO, Japan (AP) — Led by Motoyasu Takeuchi, Japan took the top seven places Saturday in the 19th HTB Cup International Ski Jump Game.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JANUARY 12, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Be particularly careful in dealing with those upon whom you depend for support who may be changing the approach they have had to solving long term problems that are annoying to you too.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can be very creative and have a pleasant and happy time until mid-afternoon after which you find on in power is apt to temporarily thwart your desires.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Take things in your stride and have a pleasant and happy time until mid-afternoon after which you find on in power is apt to temporarily thwart your desires.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Now you find that you are the one who does have the right words, phrases to get others complete attention and approval but the evening brings possibility of conflicts.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You find that you are the one who needs to gain the good will of others by showing them you are endowed with good common sense.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have brilliant ideas and can put them in motion by mid-afternoon after which you run into a number of nags or some unlooked for opposition.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There are many private mat-

ters to be handled by you today. Get at them early and get them behind you after which you can relax and enjoy yourself.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Take some time out today to consider good friends early and see what they expect of you or what you do to do after which be wary of a gossip person.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think out that situation that can be of help to you in any civic interest that fascinates you but take no chances with an irate bigwig today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You now find that you are the one who does think long and deeply upon some new project that fascinates you but if you want success put it in motion early.

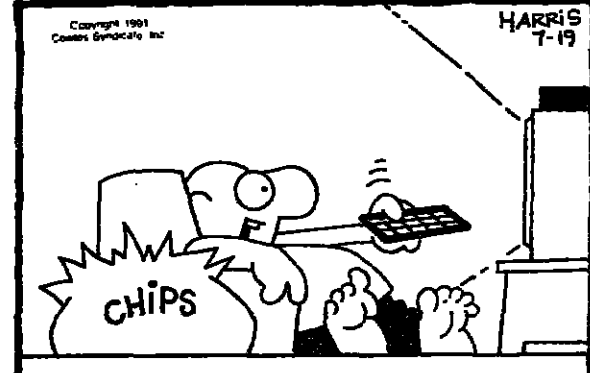
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Your care in respect to what you have agreed to do brings you the good will of those upon whom you depend the most so be painstaking with your responsibilities.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Now you find that you are the one who does appreciate the various partners who mean anything to you and you would be wise to do something special for them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is your time to get at the various and sundry duties facing you and thus you begin this time on the right note of conscientiousness and efficiency.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"My doctor says I need moderate exercise. This seems pretty moderate."

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NOPUD

LIDAY

WROFUR

REESHY

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

Saturday's Jumbles: ABOVE BROOK HEARTH FLUNKY

Answer: He has no hang-ups — which is why everything's this — ON THE FLOOR

(Answers tomorrow)

Answers tomorrow

Answers tomorrow

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & YANNAH HIRSCH
A TONYA HIRSCH PRODUCTION

VANISHING TRICKS

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ J 10
♥ A J 8 3 2
♦ K 10 8
♣ 5 2

WEST
♠ 6 4 2
♥ 9 5 4
♦ A 9 6 4 2
♣ 9 4

EAST
♠ K 8 5 3
♥ K Q
♦ J 3
♣ Q J 10 8

SOUTH
♠ A Q 7
♥ 7 6
♦ K Q 7 5
♣ A K 7 6 3

The bidding:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 4 Pass
4 Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead Nine of ♠. Almost 87,000 players took part last year in the Fifth Epsom World-wide Bridge Contest, played simultaneously throughout the world. Most of the players bid and made four hearts on this deal. One of the few pairs to defeat that contract was a duo from Poland.

The auction went as shown. North's jump to four diamonds was a Texas transfer to four hearts. At most tables declarer lost two trump tricks and a diamond, although here and there declarers guessed the

trump position and emerged with 11 tricks.

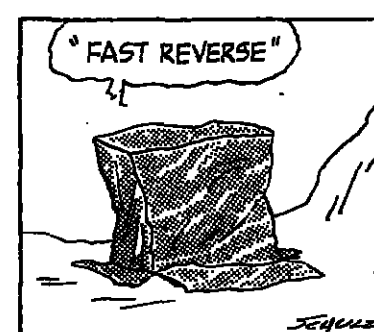
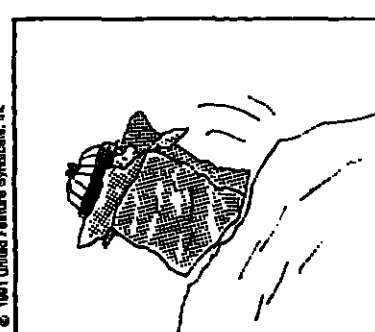
West led a club, taken by the king. Declarer took a heart finesse, losing to East's queen, and back came another club, won in the closed hand with the ace. Declarer tried another trump finesse, and East was again on lead.

The defender found a stunning defense — he shifted to the king of spades. Declarer could still have made his contract by leading a diamond to the king, drawing the last trump and then picking up the doubleton jack of diamonds, but that would have been an unusual line to pursue. Instead, declarer crossed in dummy with the jack of spades, drew the outstanding trump and led a diamond to the queen and ace.

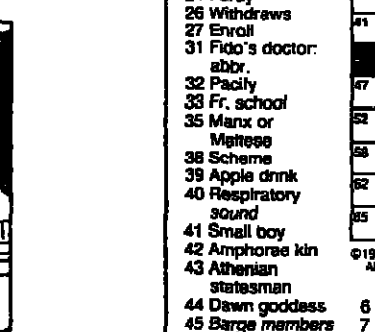
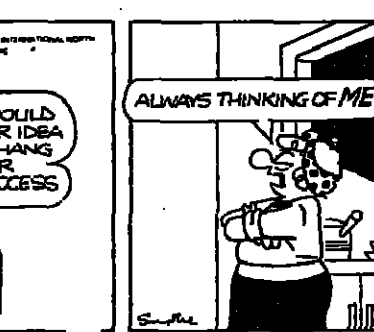
West continued the good defensive work by returning a diamond. Realizing that West had diamond length, declarer made the percentage play of finessing the ten. East's jack was the setting trick.

Each player in the event receives a booklet of the hand records analyzed by Omar Sharif. He also makes the final choice of prize winners for the awards for the best played and best defended hands of the competition.

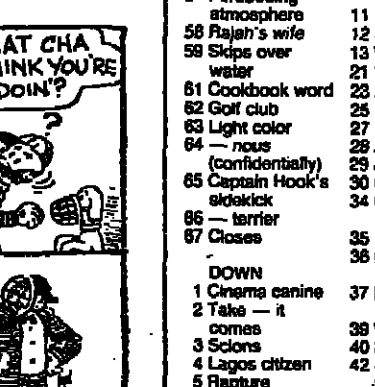
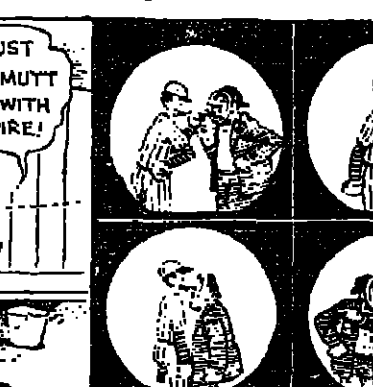
Peanuts



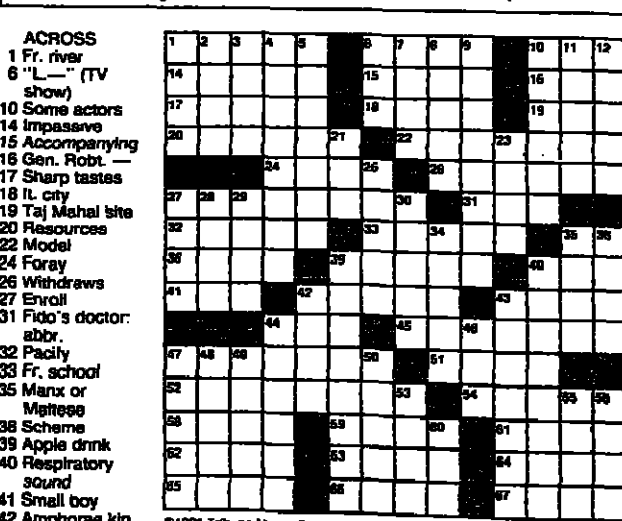
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Virginia Hopewell



Quayle points to banks for lengthening U.S. recession

LINCOLN, New Hampshire (Agencies) — Vice President Dan Quayle, defending Mr. Bush's economic policies to skeptical New Hampshire voters, blamed banks for contributing to the recession and prodded them to make more loans.

The vice president accused banks and other financial institutions of hiding behind secure treasury bills when they should be making more loans to small businesses.

On a whirlwind bus tour of small towns in the nation's leadoff presidential primary state, Mr. Quayle also defended President Bush's trip to Japan against suggestions that it had not produced breakthroughs on trade.

"You're not going to see grandiose announcements," Mr. Quayle told the Littleton Chamber of Commerce in the northern part of the state. "That's not the way things are done."

As he wound his way down the state on the second day of his 13-town campaign tour, Mr. Quayle encountered many questions about the conditions of the economy and great skepticism about administration economic policies.

New Hampshire, whose primary on Feb. 18 is the first in the nation, is one of the states hardest hit by the downturn. Mr. Bush himself plans to visit the state Wednesday.

At a shopping mall here, where he stopped for lunch, as well as at other stops, Mr. Quayle urged voters to give the Bush team a fresh chance to boost the economy.

"I know what the statistics are. I know what the unemployment rate is. I know real estate is in the tank," he said. "We will turn the statistics around."

Mr. Quayle focused sharp criticism on banks and financial institutions, claiming they did not heed Mr. Bush's call last fall to begin making more loans and were actually contributing to the continuation of the recession.

"The banks need to get back on their feet. They need to build up their reserves. But they also need to start making loans ... rather than just buying treasury bills," Mr. Quayle said.

"That's what they've been doing right now, primarily just buying treasury bills. It's safe. It's risk-free," he pointed out.

Addressing students and parents at Woodsville High School, Mr. Quayle reiterated the principal message of his two-day campaign trip: "We know times are challenging and difficult in New Hampshire. We're going to turn this around."

Mr. Quayle said he hoped economists now predicting a long, slow recovery are as wrong as they were about the recession ending last spring and he predicted the recession would soon



Alan Greenspan

be over. A man in the Woodsville audience drew loud applause when he held up what he said was a Japanese-made VCR and told Mr. Quayle that Americans want more quality U.S.-made electronic products.

"I do too," Mr. Quayle said, also to applause. "We want the products built here."

Mr. Quayle also ridiculed Republican challenger Patrick Buchanan's "America first" slogan as a call to protectionism and isolationism.

"My friends, America is first," he told audiences.

Mr. Buchanan himself also was campaigning in New Hampshire. In an appearance at Dorr Woolen Mill in Newport, he disputed Mr. Quayle's assertion that Mr. Bush

is up to the economic challenge.

"I don't think, with due respect to the president, that he even understands the challenges here," Mr. Buchanan said.

In Washington, Federal Reserve (FED) Board Chairman Alan Greenspan told members of Congress to tread carefully in devising an economic growth package lest they add even greater stress to the severely overburdened U.S. budget.

In testimony before a joint session of the Senate joint banking and budget committees, the central bank chief again came under heavy pressure to cut interest rates to get the faltering U.S. economy off dead centre.

The soaring budget deficit is expected to reach a staggering \$375 billion in the current fiscal year, Mr. Greenspan has expressed concern that in trying to jumpstart the economy Congress might unleash a spate of new deficits.

"If we were to end up with the budget process out of control, we would find that the numbers of problems that would confront the American people would be far larger than even these extremely difficult problems that confront us today," Mr. Greenspan said.

He voiced hope that interest rates cuts — most recently a one percentage point bombshell that lowered the key discount rate to 3.5 per cent — would be enough to stir an economic reawakening.

If that did not work and the economy worsened, he made clear that the Fed would act again to stimulate activity by cutting rates.

"We will continue to monitor the situation carefully and stand ready to take steps necessary to foster sustainable economic expansion," he told a joint session.

Mr. Greenspan's testimony followed the disclosure that the U.S. unemployment rate jumped to 7.1 per cent in December, its highest level in over five years, up from 6.9 per cent in November.

He was repeatedly badgered by lawmakers to do more to get the economy moving, cutting rates again to speed the recovery.

"We need more from you," Senate Banking Committee Chairman Donald Riegle told Mr. Greenspan bluntly.

Mr. Greenspan defended the Fed against the criticism, saying the central bank had already cut rates substantially.

"We have brought rates down to the lowest level in a generation," he said.

Economists said the concessions President Bush won from Japan will do little to cure America's trade problems.

Private economists were unimpressed with the commitments Mr. Bush obtained during his four-day visit to Japan. They said promises will not stop the trade deficit from worsening significantly in the next two years.

"The history has been that the Japanese say all the right things, pass a few rules and then we make absolutely no progress in getting the trade deficit down," said David Wyss, an economist with DRI-McGraw Hill Inc.

Analysts believe that America's total merchandise trade deficit dropped to about \$68 billion in 1991, the first time since 1983 that it has been below \$100 billion.

That improvement reflected gains in U.S. export sales but even more importantly a drop in imports as the recession cut into consumer demand both for American and imported goods.

Despite the new agreements with Japan, Mr. Wyss said, the American deficit is likely to surge by 61 per cent over two years, climbing to \$78 billion this year and \$110 billion in 1993, as the country finally shakes off the recession.

President Bush said in Tokyo that Japan had agreed to 11 arrangements designed to boost U.S. exports of automobiles and auto parts, paper, glass and semi-conductors.

Three-quarters of America's \$41 billion trade deficit with Japan is in the auto sector. In that area, the president extracted a loose pledge from the Japanese to buy 20,000 more U.S. cars per year and to double purchases of U.S. auto parts to \$19 billion by fiscal 1994.

Philippines warns workers against illegal recruiters

MANILA (R) — Philippine Labour Secretary Raben Torres Saturday warned seeking jobs abroad against illegal recruiters, saying many countries, especially in Europe, were cracking down on illegal migrants.

He ordered Philippine labour attaches to conduct an information campaign against recruitment agencies engaged in the trafficking of illegal workers, the state-run Philippines news agency said.

Mr. Torres said the government has received reports of illegal Filipino workers being apprehended by French authorities.

France is strengthening its laws against illegal migrants and has adopted a policy of deportation for those who enter the country clandestinely, the agency quoted him as saying.

The bulk of the Philippines' overseas workers, mostly technicians and medical workers, are in the Middle East but the number in Europe, mostly domestic helpers, has increased in recent years.

The finance secretary said Friday that the government must spend less, raise taxes and reduce the budget deficit to get new

loans from foreign creditors to revive the cash-strapped economy.

Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao said the measures were part of an agreement between the Philippines and the International Monetary Fund on new economic targets in exchange for \$5.5 billion in new loans and debt relief.

He said that inflation will have to be brought down to seven per cent from last year's target of 11 per cent. But the actual inflation rate for 1991 was 17.7 per cent.

The budget deficit has to be slashed from 43 billion pesos (\$1.6 billion) to 39 billion (\$1.4 billion), a 9.3 per cent reduction, he said.

"For the national government to be able to carry on with its responsibilities towards growth, within the bounds of economic prudence, the tax reform measures now pending in congress are deemed crucial," Mr. Estanislao said.

The new taxes are expected to raise up to 15 billion pesos in additional revenues (\$555 million) this year.

He also said that it was "critical" that revenue collection be improved by the Bureau of Inter-

nal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs.

He said that if the Philippine congress does not pass administration-sponsored tax measures before it adjourns late this month, the government may have to make drastic cuts in spending. He did not elaborate.

Mr. Estanislao said that pursuing the new economic targets would result in two per cent to three per cent growth in the economy in 1992, up from the estimated 0.5 per cent growth last year.

Mr. Estanislao did not say how spending for the May 11 national elections would affect the economy, but said economic growth will be accelerated in the second half of this year.

In 1991, the economy, reeling from the effects of a major earthquake in 1990 that killed nearly 1,600 people, suffered from the eruptions of Mount Pinatubo in June that devastated agricultural and commercial areas north of Manila and killed nearly 600 people.

The eruptions forced the closure of the U.S. Clark air base, a major employer and contributor to the economy.

Battered Australian dollar set for further slide

SYDNEY (R) — The Australian dollar, battered to near three-year lows by a confidence crisis, is expected to dive further despite a massive rescue attempt by the Reserve Bank.

Dealers estimate the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) has spent up to 1.5 billion Australian dollars (\$1.1 billion) to prevent its collapse, although economists say a lower currency can only help Australia's depressed economy.

"The Reserve Bank and the government are probably not unhappy to see it down here ... but I do not think they want to see it free-fall," said Jeff Schubert, chief economist at Hongkong Bank of Australia.

The Australian dollar crashed below 0.7400 U.S. dollars in last week's trade on panic selling following Wednesday's cut in interest rates, which has threatened the currency's status as offering one of the world's highest yields.

Dealers said investors feared the government of new Prime Minister Paul Keating, due to issue an economic package in February or March, may try to spend its way out of recession.

Antonio Dottore of ANZ McCaughan Futures said uncertainty would persist until Mr. Keating's statement.

"We should expect greater exchange rate volatility — and RBA smoothing and testing — for several weeks," Mr. Dottore said.

Chris Ferris, foreign exchange manager at Indosuez Australia Ltd, said the currency could slide to 0.7200/0.7300 U.S. this week.

"It is very nervous ... nobody is very comfortable holding big positions," he said.

The unit, trading at 0.78 U.S. only a month ago, is also near four-year lows on the Reserve Bank's trade weighted index, at 54.9.

Dealers estimate the reserve spent up to one billion Australian dollars Thursday and another 400 million to 500 million overnight and Friday morning to prop up the currency.

"I think they (the Reserve) will be happy if it stays between 0.72 and 0.75," said Mr. Ferris.

The lower currency is expected to bring relief for farmers, who have been suffering from drought and weak export prices for key rural products of wool and wheat and other commodities.

"We wouldn't want it to drop to 60 (U.S.) cents because that puts enormous pressure on the economy, but the important thing is the trend is right," said National Farmers Federation President Graham Blight in a radio interview.

He said farmers hoped it would fall to 0.70 U.S. by mid-year.

Rothschild Australia Ltd, Chief economist Tim Hughes said he did not think the Reserve was too alarmed by the currency's decline, although it was wary of

an uncontrolled collapse.

"I do not believe that the fall in the currency is of such magnitude that it threatens our inflation outcome," Mr. Hughes said, adding that it could hit 0.70 U.S. in the short term.

He said the Reserve had plenty of ammunition to pump into the currency with foreign exchange reserves at record highs but the bank had to be wary that too much intervention could lead the dollar up, to the economy's detriment.

"Australia has got a severe competitive problem and that is exacerbated by having a strong currency. There is every justification in the world for a lower currency," Mr. Hughes said.

Australia's adjusted current account deficit widened to 1.69 billion dollars (\$1.25 billion) in November, the highest in a year.

The government Wednesday cut official cash rates to 7.5 per cent from 8.5 per cent in hopes of breathing life into the economy, plagued by record unemployment of 10.5 per cent and huge foreign debt, running at 133.48 billion dollars (\$98.8 billion) in the September quarter.

Mr. Schubert said interest rates had probably bottomed.

"They are thinking about the risk of a currency collapse so will be concentrating on fiscal policy," he said. "I think in terms of the economy it is a better thing to have a lower exchange rate rather than lower interest rates."

Sweden's bright outlook dims

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP) — Sweden's new centre-right government predicted increased unemployment, stagnant wages and a higher deficit in a gloomy economic forecast issued Friday with the 1992-93 national budget proposal.

The 489.5 billion kronor (\$86.48 billion) budget cuts into traditionally generous Swedish social benefits.

It anticipates a deficit of 70.8 billion kronor (\$12.5 billion) despite cuts of 14 billion kronor (\$2.47 billion) in spending on defence, sick pay insurance, housing subsidies, newspaper subsidies and refugee centres.

One of the most controversial proposals is a complete cutoff in pay for the first two days of sickness. That would change Sweden from being the most generous in western Europe for sick pay benefits to one of the worst, second only to Portugal.

The government expects the 3.5 per cent unemployment rate, already at a post-World War II high for Sweden, to hit 3.8 per cent in 1992 and 4.5 per cent in 1993.

The government released unemployment figures Friday showing that the number of jobless Swedes doubled from December 1990 to December 1991 to

185,000.

A major reason for the 20 billion kronor (\$3.53 billion) increase in the national deficit is the reduced income from taxes caused by more unemployment and wage agreements that do not keep up with inflation.

The government plans to propose further tax reductions this spring to make Swedish industry more competitive if it joins the European Community in 1995, as Prime Minister Carl Bildt hopes.

But there is no expectation of a quick economic turnaround. The government's financial plan anticipates that the gross national product (GNP) will decline 0.2 per cent in 1992 after a decline of 1.3 per cent last year.

The government's financial experts hope the GNP could recover by about 1.3 per cent in 1993, which would not be enough to halt the continuing rise in unemployment.

The hope of recovery is based

Burma reveals big gas find

RANGOON (AP) — A large deposit of natural gas was struck near Rangoon on Jan. 3 by a joint venture of the Dutch Shell Co. and the Burmese state gas enterprise, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The deposit, struck at a depth of 9,700 feet (2,942 metre), will yield almost 15 million cubic feet (450,000 cubic metres) of gas per day, said the state-owned Working Peoples daily.

Shell is one of 10 foreign oil companies that have signed agreements with Myanmar (Burma) Oil and Gas Enterprise for on-shore exploration on a production-sharing basis.

Ukraine introduces coupons

KIEV, Ukraine (Agencies) — Ukraine took its first step Friday toward weaning itself from the Soviet rouble by introducing special coupons to buy food and other goods.

Food stores accepted only coupons, although people still could buy meals for employees at restaurants and also use coupons at private markets, for transport, in cinemas, and for services like telephone bills and rent.

Ukraine plans to introduce its own currency, the hryvna, later this year. The coupons were seen as an interim step.

Workers across the former Soviet republic received 25 per cent of their salaries in coupons. In addition, every child, dependant, pensioner and student received 200 coupons.

Most shoppers' first reaction to the new coupons was disappointment. Many had believed that the coupons would be worth 10 times more than the rouble, but they instead found the price of goods to be the same in coupons.

At the central Kiev food store, Galina Latina looked with disdain at a chicken that had cost 70 roubles per kilogramme on Thursday and 70 coupons on Friday.

"We are very disappointed with the coupons," she said. "On television, we had been promised that one coupon would be worth 10 roubles."

Most people received their coupons at their workplace Thursday, although the official start of the new system was Friday.

The coupons, printed in France, are the same colour as

corresponding denominations of roubles. They bear a portrait of Kiev's legendary female founder, Lybed, on one side, and an engraving of the city's famous St. Sofia's Cathedral on the other. The word "Ukraine" is printed in the Ukrainian language.

The introduction of the coupons was seen as a necessary move to protect the rich Ukrainian agricultural market. Often called the breadbasket of the former Soviet Union, Ukraine has rich farmland and is better supplied with food than Russia.

The coupons also will alleviate the scarcity of roubles. Due to paper shortages and inflation, roubles are increasingly hard to find, especially outside Moscow. With prices and salaries rising, it takes many more roubles to transact everyday business and the Russian government is having difficulty printing and distributing the currency.

In addition, it is hoped the coupons will curb inflation, stimulate privatisation and provide incentives for production.

Ukraine joined Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in starting price reforms this month. Since Ukraine freed its prices Jan. 2, the cost of many goods have increased from two times to eight times, according to the independent Interfax news agency.

There has been no immediate sign that the new prices have stimulated production, with stores everywhere just as empty as before.

Meanwhile, Kuwait has agreed to supply oil to Ukraine in exchange for scrap metal and machinery, the Ukrainian Radio has said.

It said Ukraine was in acute need of oil because of the failure of deliveries from Russia, but gave no further details.

The former Soviet Union has traditionally been the world's biggest oil producer. But the creeping collapse of infrastructure has caused a dramatic fall in output and threatened to make the commonwealth that has replaced the union a net oil importer.

FOR SALE

MERCEDES car 1980 model, white colour, 280E, central lock, air condition, temporary entry.

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Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

Financial Markets

Jordan Times
In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE Date: 9/11/92	NEW YORK CLOSE Date: 10/11/92
Sterling Pound	1.8160	1.7885
Deutsche Mark	1.5605	1.5845
Swiss Franc	1.3925	1.4128
French Franc	5.3835	5.4075
Japanese Yen	125.82	127.10
European Currency Unit	1.3329	1.3525

USD Per STD
European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

European Currency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.00	4.00	4.06	4.31
Sterling Pound	10.44	10.50	10.50	10.57
Deutsche Mark	9.25	9.25	9.25	9.15
Swiss Franc	7.62	7.62	7.62	7.62
French Franc	9.68	9.75	9.56	9.56
Japanese Yen	5.31	5.25	5.06	4.90
European Currency Unit	10.12	10.12	10.00	9.81

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	356.40	6.80	Silver	4.10	.085

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.679	.681
Sterling Pound	1.2151	1.2192
Deutsche Mark	.4248	.4309
Swiss Franc	.8616	.8640
French Franc	.1255	.1261
Japanese Yen	.5351	.5364
Dutch Guilder	.3796	.3815
Swedish Krona	.1184	.1190
Italian Lira	.0567	.0570
Belgian Franc	.02079	.02089

Per 100

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7720	1.7800
Lebanese Lira	.0772	.0777
Saudi Riyal	.1808	.1814
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	.1840	.1847
Egyptian Pound	.2000	.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7380	1.7460
UAE Dirham	.1840	.1847
Greek Drachma	.3750	.3800
Cypriot Pound	1.5150	1.5250

Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	1/1/92	Close	8/1/92	Close
All-Share	131.29	135.26	131.29	135.26
Banking Sector	108.02	111.45	108.02	111.45
Insurance Sector	129.66	131.31	129.66	131.31
Industry Sector	165.75	165.48	165.75	165.48
Services Sector	145.87	147.80	145.87	147.80

December 31, 1991 - 1992

Cinema CONCORD Tel: 677420

Super Star
Kevin Costner
1991 Oscar Winner
in his outstanding
super production

ROBIN HOOD

Prince of Thieves
Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema PHILADELPHIA Tel: 634144

Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore in

GHOST

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.
Special shows for children on Thursday and Friday at 11:30 a.m.

NINJA TURTLES

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre Tel: 675571

As of Thursday, Jan. 9 at 8:00 p.m.

THE NEW OPENING

The stars of Haret Abu Awwad Family in their play:

Zaman Al Shaklabah (Somersault Time)

Ticket window will be open daily...

Cinema RAINBOW Tel: 625155

TERMINATOR "2" JUDGEMENT DAY

Show: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Yeltsin ready to declare Russia military successor to USSR

MOSCOW (AP) — Boris Yeltsin is preparing a decree that would declare Russia the Soviet Union's military successor until the former republics create a joint command of the armed forces, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The planned three-point decree says control of the military is to be assumed by "the Russian Federation president and organs which have his authorisation" until the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) settle their differences on the issue.

The Yeltsin decree, printed in the usually reliable newspaper Nezavisimaya Gazeta, is likely to exacerbate already high tensions between Russia and Ukraine. The two most populous former Soviet republics both claim right of control of the Soviet Navy's prized Black Sea Fleet, based in the Crimean peninsula of Ukraine.

The decree also said Russia will take "upon itself the rights and duties of the former USSR relating to its armed forces, including those located outside the territory of the Russian Federation" until a joint command is established.

The decree, which the newspaper said it obtained from "trustworthy sources," said the Russian Defence Ministry would be responsible for implementing the programme. It did not say when the decree would be issued.

The decree was published the day after the Commonwealth's 11 foreign ministers met behind closed doors to discuss the military and political issues that threaten to turn the once-mighty Soviet military on itself.

The Interfax News Agency reported that Mr. Yeltsin said he was sending a Russian delegation to the former Soviet republics, including the Ukrainian capital Kiev Saturday, to help settle the issues.

Like the decree, the move could be interpreted as intimidation by the Russian government. The delegation is to be headed by Sergei Sakharov, a Yeltsin aide and deputy chairman of the Russian government. Interfax reported.

A military commission headed by former Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, the interim commander of the Commonwealth's Armed Forces, is also planning to participate, Interfax said.

Alexander Kotenkov, deputy chairman of the Russian legislature's Committee for Defence and Security Issues, told Interfax the meeting could decide the fate of the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth foreign ministers failed to reach a significant agreement Friday or even formally discuss the most controversial issue, the Black Sea

Fleet, Russian media said.

The ministers did form a group to coordinate their separate foreign policies and agree to meet on Jan. 20 to divide up the former Soviet Union's property abroad, the Russian Information Agency and the TASS News Agency reported.

The mixed results provided little encouragement that the former Soviet republics can resolve their disputes through the 5-week-old Commonwealth, even though Russian and Ukrainian officials said they were hopeful.

In Sevastopol, the Ukrainian port where the Black Sea Fleet is based, its commander, Adm. Igor Kasatonov, said Friday that allowing sailors to choose sides would cripple the navy and tip the balance of sea power in favour of the U.S. 6th Fleet, Interfax reported.

Ukraine triggered the arguments by declaring control of the Black Sea Fleet and several army units, and by planning to administer Ukrainian oaths of allegiance to some of the 1.3 million former Soviet soldiers on its territory.

The troops are among an estimated 3.7 million former Soviet servicemen. The Black Sea Fleet comprises 45 surface warships and 300 smaller vessels, and is among the strongest in the former Soviet Navy. Naval commanders warned Fri-

day that sailors might turn against each other if forced to choose between the Commonwealth or their native states.

In a report from the Far Eastern port of Vladivostok, TASS said officers on the guided-missile cruiser Chernomv Ukraina said "borders will have to be drawn across crew compartments" if sailors must pick sides.

Naval officers based at the port of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky released a statement criticising the Ukrainian plans. "History will never pardon us for the blunder of a split," TASS quoted the statement as saying.

Military commanders warned that aviators in Ukraine might defect with their jets to Russia if the two states don't resolve their differences.

Fliers will "not rule out the unsanctioned transfer of military aircraft deployed on the territory of Ukraine to Russian airfields," declared Lt. Col. Sergei Starykh, leader of the Independent Association of Officers in Ukraine, TASS reported.

More than 44 per cent of all servicemen in Ukraine are ethnic Russians.

Mr. Kozyrev, the Russian foreign minister, said he favoured joint use of the former Soviet Union's armed forces during a transition period, but did not say how long that might be.

U.S. optimistic Black Sea Fleet row will be settled

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has expressed optimism that Ukraine and Russia would peacefully resolve their dispute over the Black Sea Fleet but warned that continued conflict over such matters would only undercut reform efforts.

"A conflict over these issues is in no one's interest, and will only detract from the real need to push forward with necessary economic and political reform," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters.

He also announced that Washington has now established formal diplomatic ties with four of the newly-independent former Soviet republics — Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Armenia.

Official relations with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are expected shortly, and a senior U.S. official, Deputy Under-Secretary of State Robert Fauver, is now on a visit to both countries to discuss economic reform, Mr. Boucher said.

During a trip to the former Soviet Union last month, Secretary of State James Baker found the presidents of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan eager for Western investment.

Mr. Boucher told reporters the United States expects these newly-independent states to sort out their military relationships in accordance with international obligations.

U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney said Friday that clashes over the former Soviet Union's military assets could lead to disputes over the nuclear inventory.

"To date, it hasn't," Mr. Cheney said, praising the republics for acting very responsibly to control nuclear weapons.

"It's something we watch very carefully, of course, because a dispute over military assets could slip over and affect the nuclear inventory," Mr. Cheney said.

His British counterpart, Defence Secretary Tom King, warned of a "tug-of-war" over nuclear weapons.

"There are huge forces at work and we cannot be sure what the outcome will be," Mr. King told BBC-TV Friday morning.

"What we are acutely concerned about is the issue of nuclear weapons to ensure they are not some part of a tug-of-war in which pieces may fall off or get into the wrong hands," Mr. King said.

Meanwhile TASS news agency said Ukraine has begun to remove tactical nuclear weapons from its territory for destruction.

It quoted the head of missile combat training for the Kiev Military District as saying that nuclear warheads were being taken out of the republic under guard and in the presence of representatives of Russia, Ukraine and foreign states.

The nuclear weapons will be sent for dismantling to Russia, which has the only plant on the territory of the former Soviet Union equipped for the task.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the setting up of the Commonwealth, Ukraine said it wished to become a nuclear-free republic.

It undertook to remove all short-range or tactical nuclear weapons from its territory by July 1, and all strategic weapons by 1994.

Talks on Yugoslav ceasefire start in Hungary

PECS, Hungary (Agencies) — Representatives of Yugoslavia's federal army, the Croatian military and the European Community (EC) held talks Saturday to shore up a ceasefire in Croatia that has held for more than a week.

Croatian General Imra Agotic told reporters the Yugoslav and Croatian generals, meeting in a hotel at this neutral site in southern Hungary, would discuss measures designed to help keep the peace.

The talks would also determine the site of future meetings, he added before entering the session. General Andrija Raseta led the federal army team and EC truce monitors also took part.

EC monitors based in the Croatian capital Zagreb have resumed work suspended after a federal air force jet shot down an EC helicopter over Croatia Tuesday, killing five soldiers.

The monitors have sought guarantees from both sides that they may operate safely.

The United Nations is ready to send 10,000 peacekeeping troops to Yugoslavia if the U.N.-brokered ceasefire holds.

The ceasefire, in its ninth day, has halted fighting that has killed 6,000 people since Croatia declared independence last June, sparking an army-supported uprising by Serbs in the breakaway republic.

Yugoslavia's Defence Ministry has opened criminal proceedings against an air force officer after five European Community monitors in Croatia died when their helicopter was shot out of the sky.

Militant Serbs in Croatia — whose headline allies in the army are accused by many Croats of planning the attack — vowed to resist the planned deployment of United Nations troops in the disintegrating Yugoslav Federation.

The civil war threatened to spread to Bosnia-Herzegovina as the ethnically mixed republic's president vowed he would not allow independence-seeking Serbs there to secede.

A Muslim city in Bosnia was shaken by bomb blasts and gunfire Friday, a day after leaders of the republic's ethnic Serb minority said they would secede in a move that would mirror what has occurred in Croatia.

Bosnia itself is seeking independence from Yugoslavia.

A bomb exploded near a Roman Catholic Church and three bombs rocked restaurants in the predominantly Muslim city of Mostar, according to news reports. No one was injured, but the blasts caused extensive damage.

Bosnia-Herzegovina's population of 4.2 million is roughly 40 per cent Muslim and one-third Serb, with the Croats and other minorities.

Most Croats are Roman Catholics, while Serbs are Orthodox Christians. The Muslims in Bosnia are mostly ethnic Slavs who converted to Islam when their lands were ruled by the Ottoman empire.

Two people were injured when army reservists opened fire on a train near a military airport in Mostar, 72 kilometres south east of Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital.

Swiss sailors survive whale attack

CAPE TOWN (R) — Three Swiss sailors arrived in Cape Town after being rescued in mid-Atlantic from a catamaran hauled by angry sperm whales. "It was very frightening," said Jacques Michel, an actor from Geneva who was sailing with round-the-world skipper Bernard Heymann for the second time. Michel said the three men's eight-metre catamaran hit and injured a resting whale, which caused the others to attack on Dec. 21. The yacht was rammed three times by nine or 10 sperm whales, causing hull damage and leaks that they patched with sails.

Sleepy burglar gets a year in government bed

JAKARTA (R) — An Indonesian burglar, caught after he fell asleep on the job, has been jailed for a year, the Antara News Agency said. Tatang, 25, broke into a Jakarta shop but could not open the door to a room where he thought the money was kept. "I got very tired and fell asleep," he told the court, the shop's owner found him the next morning. Tatang was also found guilty of stealing wallets and boxes of matches from a nearby shop.

Whiff stops Woolf

LONDON (R) — French perfume stops dogs barking, according to a scientist promoting a new device to keep canines quiet. A special collar, equipped with sensors, releases a whiff of lemony citronella scent when the wearer starts barking. The smell so confuses the dog that it stops yapping, said animal behaviourist Dr. Roger Mugford. Dr. Mugford demonstrated the French invention at Britain's annual Crufts Dog Show. "Without the bark there is no bite," newspapers Friday quoted him as saying. Dr. Mugford said 40,000 French dog owners had already bought the device, which costs £80 (£150 in Britain). "I am told that France has become a much quieter place since it was introduced," he said.

U.S. postal service to let public choose Elvis stamp

WASHINGTON (R) — Elvis lives just on a stamp, perhaps, but the U.S. Postal Service is planning to depict the king of rock and roll in 1993 as part of a series honouring American music. The U.S. public will have the final say on which portrait — young and lean or aged and flabby — will go on the Elvis Presley postage stamp. Postal service spokesman Lou Eberhardt said there are 20 to 25 artists' renderings of Presley in the running and an advisory committee will narrow the field to two contenders. The public vote will be held in the public next month. "The public's got stronger opinions about which Elvis than any other subject we've ever done," Postmaster General Anthony Frank told Reuters. Mr. Eberhardt said the Postal Service had set one criterion: Of the two finalists, one must portray the young Elvis and the other has to be a portrait of the king in his twilight years. He said fans will vote for an Elvis portrait on postcards sold in posts across the country, which they will then mail.

Incest victim wins child support from her father

VANCOUVER (R) — A British Columbia court has awarded a 23-year-old woman 400 Canadian dollars (\$345) in monthly child support payments from her father, who is the father of her two daughters. The award by the judge in July when the woman's lawyer is expected to seek a higher sum. Lawyer Richard Hart said he believes it is the first such incest-related child support case in Canada. The woman told reporters outside the court her father had refused to support their children, now aged three and five, unless he could not agree to that. "I was so afraid of him doing it to them," she said. The woman was 13 when she left her mother and stepfather and went to live with her father, then 33. She said that within a year he had seduced her and when she was 17 made her pregnant. They had a second daughter two years later. Her father, who attended the hearing, served four months in jail after pleading guilty to 1987 charges of sexually assaulting the woman, whose name has been withheld to protect her children.

Russian leader accepts U.N. invitation

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin accepted an invitation Friday to attend his first meeting of the United Nations Security Council. Russian media reported.

Mr. Yeltsin received the formal invitation Friday by telephone from British Prime Minister John Major in Mithini-Novogordo, where Mr. Yeltsin was on the last day of a tour of three Russian cities, the TASS News Agency said.

Mr. Yeltsin accepted during the 15-minute phone call, TASS said.

Britain, the United States, France and China occupy four of the five permanent seats on the 15-member Council. The Soviet Union occupied the fifth, and leaders of the new Commonwealth of Independent States agreed last month to let Russia take over the Soviet chair.

The Security Council session is scheduled for Jan. 31 in New York and will discuss the collapse

of the Soviet Union. During the call, the leaders discussed the possibility of Yeltsin stopping in London on Jan. 29-30 to meet Mr. Major and other British officials.

The summit meeting of the 15 United Nations Security Council members will take place in New York on January 31. U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said Friday.

Dr. Ghali gave the date of the proposed summit of the 15 heads of government after talks with French President Mitterrand in Paris.

He told reporters on his way out of Mr. Mitterrand's Elysee Palace: "We broached certain subjects like the presence of observers in Yugoslavia and the coming summit of the 15 members of the Security Council who are to meet on Jan. 31 in New York."

The aim of the summit, proposed by Britain as this month's

president of the Security Council, is to discuss strengthening the U.N.'s role, including its peacekeeping operations. Government leaders are also expected to mull the security implications of the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Dr. Ghali's trip to Paris was his first foreign visit since taking over the top U.N. job from Javier Perez de Cuellar on Jan. 1.

Meanwhile two more former Soviet republics, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, have applied to join the United Nations, a U.N. spokeswoman said Friday.

Kazakhstan applied last week. The last requests were contained in letters from the presidents of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan sent through the Russian U.N. ambassador, Yuli Vorontsov.

It is not yet known when the Security Council, which must endorse membership applications, will meet or take up the three pending requests.

Lithuanian guards fire at army convoy

MOSCOW (R) — Lithuanian border guards fired warning shots at a convoy of the Russian-dominated former Soviet army as it forced its way into Russia's Kaliningrad enclave, TASS News Agency said Saturday.

TASS said the incident, a further blow to a military already bogged by Ukrainian-Russian disputes over the future of the southern Black Sea Fleet, occurred Friday when Lithuanian Guards refused to allow a column to pass at the Sovetsk Crossing Point between Lithuania and Kaliningrad.

"The lorries drove around the crossing point and broke through across the bridge despite shots being fired into the air and at the tyres of one of the vehicles," TASS said.

Troops must cross Lithuania to reach Kaliningrad, a small enclave seized from Germany in 1945 and used as a base for the Baltic Fleet and large army detachments. After Lithuania's independence in September the Vilnius government agreed free passage in principle to military and commercial traffic.

Meanwhile, in the year since Soviet troops stormed the Lithuanian Television Tower, prosecutor Juozas Gaudutis has determined who organised and executed the bloody attack.

But he remains unsure if Mikhail Gorbachev played a part. "Did he know or didn't he? There are signs he did know, and signs he didn't. Certainly, we need to question him," said Mr. Gaudutis, the chief investigator into the events of January 1991.

The Baltic crackdown came at the beginning of the year that saw the end of the Soviet Union.

Georgia's new rulers may join Commonwealth

TBILISI, Georgia (R) — The overthrow of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia may bring Georgia out of isolation into the Commonwealth of former Soviet republics.

In a sign that democracy may not come easily after two weeks of bloodshed and months of instability, members of parliament failed Friday to muster a quorum when they met to legitimise the creation of a new civilian government.

Lawlessness persisted in Tbilisi, for two weeks the domain of rival militias, where Radio Russia said "criminal elements" had killed one policeman and injured two.

Moscow television on Saturday quoted Tengiz Sigua, due to head a new interim government, as saying he would have talks with the presidents of Russia and Ukraine and did not rule out Georgia joining the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mr. Sigua's comments reflected the need to set about rebuilding Georgia's ailing economy and its government.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, who fled to Armenia Monday, had been criticised by opponents and had alienated some business circles by failing to follow other republic's economic liberalisation.

He made Georgia the only one of 12 Soviet republics not to sign the founding treaty of the new Commonwealth, despite the danger of economic isolation.

Mr. Sigua has set about bringing Georgia into the Commonwealth fold by saying he and the military council now running Georgia will hand over power as soon as parliament can convene.

Some of the parliamentarians who met Friday were optimistic that he could help bring about a smooth transition, as the armed groups that drove out Mr. Gamsakhurdia gradually took a back seat.

Phnom Penh hands over possible American remains

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodian officials handed over Saturday what could be the remains of two of the last U.S. servicemen to die in the Indochina war.

Cambodia says the remains are those of Marine troopers who took part in an attempt to rescue crew members of the U.S. container ship Mayaguez in May, 1975 after it was captured by the Khmer Rouge, which had just come to power.

The remains could not be confirmed as those of Americans until they were taken to army

laboratories in Hawaii for identification, U.S. diplomats said.

The two small rough-hewn caskets were handed over to U.S. envoy Charles Twining at a simple morning ceremony on the tarmac of Phnom Penh's Pochentong Airport.

A U.S. Stars and Stripes flag was placed on each casket before they were put aboard a U.S. Air Force transport plane bound for Bangkok, from where they would be taken on to Hawaii Wednesday.

Burma sends more troops along Bangladesh border

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh (R) — Burma has poured nearly 15,000 more regular troops into positions along its border with Bangladesh in the past three days, raising the total to 40,000, Bangladesh defence sources said Saturday.

"A massive military build-up is continuing on the Burmese side with stationing of about 15,000 regulars since the talks on Jan. 7 to ease border tension ended in a stalemate," one source said.

"There were some 25,000 troops stationed near the border before the meeting," he said from Chittagong.

Officials have refused to reveal Bangladesh's border strength.

Reporters in Chittagong port city said they had seen military convoys heading toward the frontier almost daily.

"We also hear that Burmese soldiers who pulled back a short distance last week... may have been repositioned," the source said. He gave no details.

Bangladeshi officials had welcomed the pullback as a sign of easing tension.

Trouble began along the 270-kilometre border when Burmese soldiers attacked a camp of paramilitary Bangladesh rifles on Dec. 21, killing one soldier and wounding three.

They were injured in nearby Rezupara village by a bomb believed planted by the attackers.

The incidents triggered military alerts on both sides.

Border commanders of the two countries held a first meeting on Dec. 31 to defuse the tension, and Burma said the attack was a mistake while soldiers were pursuing Muslim rebels. They promised to return stolen weapons.

Rangoon moved away from that position in a second meeting. Dhaka officials said after the talks Wednesday.

"They are pulling back from what they promised before and trying to shift allegations on Bangladesh," a senior Foreign Ministry official said.

"We have since reallocated our army, navy and air force. The Burmese will be given a befitting reply if they again try to trespass (across) our border," Colonel Ali Ahsan, a Rifles commander, said Saturday.

Relations between Dhaka and Rangoon deteriorated last April when thousands of Burmese Muslims, or Rohingyas, started to flee into south east Bangladesh to escape alleged persecution by the Burmese army.

Burma believes rebels fighting for an independent homeland in western Burma's Muslim-majority Arakan state receive most of

their support from Burmese refugees in Bangladesh.

Officials have denied any Burmese insurgency based in Bangladesh.

Officials counted more than 25,000 Rohingya refugees in the Cox's Bazar district alone, state-run Bangladesh Radio said Saturday.

"The refugee number could reach 50,000 or more when counting in neighbouring areas is complete," it said.

"Myanmar (Burma) army and police are continuing atrocities on Arakan Muslims while a famine condition is prevailing in Maungdaw and Butthidaung areas," the Bangladesh news agency (BSS) said quoting reports by refugees.

"People are dying of hunger, malnutrition and disease as there is no supply of daily necessities in the whole Arakan state because of continued curfew," the agency said.

In a separate development, ethnic Karen rebels have killed 95 Burmese government soldiers attacking a strategic guerrilla-held hill near the border with Thailand, rebel leaders said Saturday.

The Karen National Union (KNU) lost 12 soldiers in the battle for Thipavich Hill, about eight kilometres south of the

KNU headquarters at Manerpaw, near the northern Thai-Burmese border.

Karen leaders said other minority groups helped them in the fighting that began in mid-December to retain the hill.

Burmese troops wanted to use the hill as an artillery base to bombard Manerpaw, KNU officials said in this northern Thai border town.

More than 100 of the 2,500 Burmese government troops were injured by KNU mortar shells and more than 20 Karen guerrillas were wounded, they said.

Burmese officials were not available to comment. A local press report Saturday quoted a Thai army report as saying Burmese troops had been killed trying to seize KNU garrisons.

The government troops have been trying to seize the hill since the middle of last month, KNU officials said.

The Karen are the biggest of a dozen ethnic guerrilla groups that have been fighting for autonomy from Rangoon for more than four decades.

Early last year, Rangoon planes bombed the Thipavich Hill to free troops besieged by KNU fighters. Government soldiers suffered heavy casualties in the battle that ended last April.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Cambodian council meeting founders

PHNOM PENH (R) — A meeting of Cambodia's reconciliation council, the body supposed to help the United Nations steer the country to a durable peace, founded Saturday after three of its members failed to attend. "It was awful, tedious," said one independent observer at the meeting, who did not want to be identified. "It just went round in circles. There was no agreed agenda, it was quite unstructured." "It was not acrimonious, they just did not make a great deal of headway. It's no reason to think the whole thing's falling apart and give up, but they really have to get their act together," the source said. The Supreme National Council (SNC) has been plagued by difficulties since agreeing to make Phnom Penh its headquarters under U.N.-sponsored peace accords signed in October.

Clinton ridicules Bush's Japan trip

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton Friday ridiculed President Bush's trade mission to Japan, saying Mr. Bush should have concentrated on opening Japanese markets to all goods, not just cars. "Did you ever see anything as silly as this trade mission to Japan?" Mr. Clinton asked several hundred people at a Texas Democratic Party event. "He takes those auto executives over there who lost \$6 billion last year and are still paying themselves six times as much as the Japanese," he said. Clinton, governor of Arkansas, said Mr. Bush should have taken farmers, financiers, electronics manufacturers and construction representatives instead. He said Mr. Bush should have presented these people as "our winners," and said, "you see those people? If your markets were as open as ours, they would sell you \$10 billion worth of stuff. We would put 300,000 Americans to work. If you want to keep selling your cars in our country, you open your markets to these people."

3 face death penalty in Cuba

HAVANA (R) — Cuban Vice President Raul Castro has blamed the U.S. government, Cuban exile leaders and internal opponents for the killings of three Cuban policemen and threatened "revolutionary justice" against the country's enemies. At the same time the state media reported that three men captured on Cuba's northern coast with arms and explosives faced a possible death penalty after being tried Friday on charges of sabotage, terrorism and enemy propaganda. "He who lives by the sword, dies by the sword," Mr. Castro, armed forces minister and younger brother of President Fidel Castro, said in a funeral address for the three police officers, who were gunned down Thursday by a different group trying to flee the island.

Russia reverts to old time system

MOSCOW (R) — Russia will move clocks forward by one hour on Jan. 19, reverting to a system in force until last year, TASS News Agency said Saturday. The move, which means Moscow and western Russia will be three hours ahead of Greenwich mean time, instead of two hours, will give electricity and increase daylight in the evenings, TASS said. Clocks will move forward by another hour on the final Sunday in March as Russia moves to summer time, TASS said. A decision last year to move Russian time closer to that in the rest of Europe was described as a way to correct dictator Josef Stalin's mistakes. But many Russians complained at last year's change, which meant that in winter dusk fell early in the Moscow area. "Now we can sleep when it is dark and we will have more daylight in the evening," said one Muscovite.

2 Koreas to sign nuclear accord Monday

SEOUL (R) — South Korea will Monday sign a North-South pact declaring the divided peninsula free of nuclear weapons, a spokesman for the premier's office said Saturday.

The two Koreas will exchange signed copies Tuesday at Panmunjom, the sole crossing point on the heavily fortified truce line dividing Stalinist North from South.

Prime Minister Chung Won-Sik will sign for the South and Premier Yon Hyong-Muk for the North, he said.

The nuclear accord goes into effect when the two premiers formally exchange documents during Feb. 19-21 talks in Pyongyang, the spokesman said.

Settling the nuclear question, described as the greatest threat to peace in the post-cold war world, frees the two Koreas to put into practice a historic non-aggression and reconciliation pact signed on Dec. 13.

For members of about 10,000 Korean families separated by the war and decades of bitter hostility, the treaty promises the tantalising prospect of reunion.

The nuclear-free agreement, struck after hours of talks stretching late into the evening of Dec. 31, requires the two Koreas to abstain from the manufacture, possession, deployment and use of nuclear weapons.

North Korea denies South Korean, Japanese and U.S. allegations that Pyongyang is little more than a year away from manufacturing its first crude nuclear arms.

The nuclear agreement binds the two states, still formally at war 39 years after the three-year Korean War ended, to establish a joint nuclear control committee within a month of the formal exchange.